

REPORT OF DEBATES
IN THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

HELD IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,

1844.

BY ROBERT ATHOW WEST
OFFICIAL REPORTER.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE General Conference having ordered the publication of the Journals of 1840 and 1844, and the debates of 1844, as reported and published in the official papers, and it being found impracticable to amalgamate the Journals of the late session with the debates, we have endeavoured so to distribute the matter as that one publication may not supersede the other. The acts of the General Conference are only so far introduced into the present publication as is necessary to show the connection between them and the debates which they occasioned. In the published Journals, all the acts of the body are given, in due form, precisely as recorded. Many topics which occupied the attention of the General Conference are not noticed in the published debates, for the reason, that they occasioned little or no discussion, and are fully presented in the Journals. We hope the execution of the present publication will prove satisfactory to the speakers whose speeches are here republished, and to the public generally, though we are not certain that some errors have not escaped us. In every instance we have inserted the corrections which have been made by speakers, and forwarded to us, and it is hoped we may presume that those who have made no corrections were satisfied with the reports as originally published.

GEORGE PECK.

New-York, August 9, 1844.

DEBATES

IN THE

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

DURING ITS SESSION IN NEW-YORK, 1844.

FRIDAY, MAY 3.

Appointment of a Committee on Slavery.

PETITIONS, memorials, &c., from the annual conferences were called for, commencing with the New-York Conference.

A petition from the Providence Conference, on the subject of slavery, was presented. The reading was called for and proceeded with, when Mr. Slicer moved that it lie on the table until a committee should be provided to whom to refer it.

Mr. Crowder objected: he hoped it would be read. It would give an idea of the character of other memorials on the subject.

Mr. Drake expressed a hope that all memorials from annual conferences would be read.

Motion withdrawn, and the memorial was read.

Mr. Collins moved that the memorial be referred to a committee of one from each annual conference, to be called a Committee on Slavery.

Dr. Capers hoped the motion would not be entertained. He felt mortified to think that there could be one annual conference in the connection capable of memorializing the General Conference on the subject of slavery, as if they were all pro-slavery men, advocates of the system for the system's sake, for dollars, or for the wool, or anything else. As a Methodist preacher he heard it with mortification. He wished it were a more respectable document, that he might treat it in a more respectful way than referring it at all. He thought that, without intending it, the General Conference had ministered to the unfortunate agitation that prevailed, by treating the subject from General Conference to General Conference, as though it were a fair matter for their legislation in an abstract view. It had thus become a fruitful source of strife. He hoped to hear no more of a Committee on Slavery. It never did and never could do any good. It had done much evil and always would do. He moved that the motion to refer lie on the table. (Lost.)

Mr. Collins said, that as a document from an annual conference it was fairly entitled to some respect from the General Conference. There were, doubtless, some expressions in it highly exceptionable, but still it ought to be referred. He was equally sorry with Dr. Capers that the subject had to be touched upon there, but he came prepared for it from the agitation which prevailed in certain parts respecting it—an agitation which would be increased if they did not take up the subject; and the main object was to manage it so as to create the least excitement there or elsewhere. Let it be referred, and the committee could report or not, as they thought fit, and the report, if offered, would be subject to discussion.

Dr. Capers said he had no personal interest in the matter. He was no candidate for the office of bishop. He had never yet heard a Methodist preacher broach the doctrines which were hinted at broadly in that memorial. As an annual conference document, he would wish to treat it with respect, but if offence must come, he would not, because it came from some favourite brother, wink at it. The members of an annual conference ought to know better the spirit and character of their brethren in the slaveholding states. He thought it would be quite respectful enough to let it lie on the table.

Mr. Dow hoped they would approach this subject with the same calmness with which they discussed any other topic. He was in favour of a committee, that the subject might be brought before them in a kind and Christian spirit and manner: and was surprised that the brother who yesterday moved for the appointment of the standing committees had omitted this.

Mr. Early said he was in favour of receiving all petitions on all subjects in a spirit of civility and kindness. It was not intended that the memorial should lie on the table for ever; but when the order of the day was gone through, then to have the discussion. If they would have these discussions every morning, they would never have done receiving memorials. Four and eight years ago similar petitions were received, and he (Mr. E.) made a motion for their reference to a committee, and a great excitement was got up on a question that he thought had been long settled. He could not yesterday ask for a committee in advance, and in ignorance whether such a committee would be needed. He had no interest in the matter, except in common with any other member. Until he lost his senses he should ask no favour beyond what they had already granted him. He came there from Virginia, to promote the peace of society. The south differed from the north, and always would differ, and unless a spirit of forbearance and compromise were exercised, they would differ to an extent that was not anticipated in some quarters. They had perfect confidence in the uprightness and conscientiousness of their friends, and would not treat them unkindly unless driven to it by the first law of nature, necessity. If the allegations of that memorial be established, the south will sink altogether. We have no way of replying, unless you allow us to go before a committee. We do not refuse to die if we deserve to die. But let the charges come against us in a regular form. The doctrines of the Church were settled before our people entered it. Let it only be seen that they are yet to be settled, and our people will go out by thousands.

Dr. Capers was not against receiving the memorial; but Methodistical propriety required the course he had recommended.

Mr. Crandall did not quite understand what was the motion before the conference. The President explained.

The motion to lay on the table was lost, and the memorial referred to a committee to be composed of one from each annual conference.

The presentation of memorials was then proceeded with, on the understanding that one on each subject should be read.

Numerous memorials and petitions were then presented on the subject of slavery, the "coloured-testimony resolution," temperance, division of conferences, election of a bishop, examination of preachers prior to their being licensed, the establishment of a social library, &c., &c.

Memorial of William J. Waller.

On the call for memorials from the Virginia Conference, Bishop Soule presented a document which had been laid on the President's table the first day of the conference. It was a memorial from Dr. William J. Waller, of the Virginia Conference, praying for an expression of opinion on certain questions of doctrine and of law, and making some complaints against the manner in which the Virginia Conference had conducted their business, and also against the editor of the Richmond Christian Advocate in the conduct of that paper.

A member moved its reference to the Committee on Itinerary.

Mr. Sandford amended by moving for a select committee, as there was one subject in the memorial that did not come within the province of any of the standing committees. He moved a select committee of five.

Bishop Soule said, the memorial had not come through the delegates, and he knew not who laid it on the President's table.

Dr. Winans said, that the memorial asked them to do that which they had always refused to do—viz., to give any other decision with regard to our laws than that which had been given by the legislators of the body. As to the subject of doctrines, they were settled long ago, and he was not willing that they should be doubted by implication.

Bishop Soule explained more fully what he believed to be the contents of the memorial. The doctrine alluded to was the doctrine of baptism, reduced to the question whether the children of any other persons than those who were members of the Church were entitled to that ordinance in the Methodist Episcopal Church?

Dr. Capers said, this was a point on which the brethren felt some interest, and

he would explain. He had no knowledge of the contents of the paper; he was passing through the city of Richmond when brother Waller came to the cars to see the Virginia delegates, and not finding them, requested him to take charge of the papers. He (Dr. C.) had no connection with the affair whatever, but he took charge of the documents, and on his arrival laid them on the President's table, with a remark that he supposed the President did not hear, as he was engaged at the time.

Mr. Early had no objection to the consideration of the document, but it certainly could not all be referred to the same committee, and should be referred to a special committee. He regretted that Dr. Waller had not acquainted the delegates with it. There were four present.

Dr. Winans said, he was compelled to differ from his brethren from Virginia. He thought there was good reason why they should not refer the document to any committee: for this reason, that, if every respectable minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church were allowed to approach the conference with every difficulty that might start up in his mind, the conference would have no time to do anything else but to solve such difficulties. He was not disposed to take any action upon it, but let it lie on the table. That General Conference was asked to explain the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church—those doctrines had been too long before the world to need now to be stated and explained. He too had difficulties, and so had many of his brethren; but should they encumber the conference with a solution of them? He pressed his motion that the documents lie on the table, which was carried by a vote of 76 to 71.

Bishop Soule said, he regretted that he had had to present any such document; he feared lest the brethren should be led into erroneous action for want of a clear representation of the matter. He then recapitulated the contents of the memorial.

Dr. W. A. Smith thought the matter had been misunderstood, and that it was intended only to lay that part of the memorial on the table which referred to the doctrines of the Church. If so, he hoped they would reverse their decision, and taking up the charge against the Virginia Conference, bring that body to account for their conduct. They must make the laws clear, if they were not so.

Several members here moved a reconsideration of that part of the vote which referred to the Virginia Conference. A reconsideration of the whole was also moved on the ground that there had been some misunderstanding in the matter.

Dr. Capers inquired whether they were not introducing a dangerous precedent. Every member of the minority might very readily misapprehend, or think that the majority misapprehended. Perhaps a few in the present case might have misunderstood the motion, but not the majority. It might have been as well to have made the exception in the first instance, but he thought it would now be best let alone. Dr. Waller was not present, and he (Dr. C.) could not think any good would come of it. No one impeached the Virginia Conference.

Dr. W. A. Smith said, he remembered that no one had a right to come there against the Virginia Conference except on an appeal.

A member moved to take from the table that part of the memorial which referred to the Virginia Conference.

Mr. Early hoped they would not hesitate to do that. The Virginia Conference courted investigation.

Dr. Winans rose to a point of order. He doubted whether they had a right to take up part of a vote for reconsideration.

Dr. Luckey suggested that they should go on with the order of the business. They could take this up afterward if they thought proper.

Mr. Early said he had not learned that the Virginia Conference was even complained of. He learned that the acts and doings of that conference had already been referred to the Committee on Itinerancy. The records were in his possession, ready to be produced the moment any member of that committee called for them. But let their proceedings come up in a formal way, otherwise the whole time of the General Conference would be occupied in receiving memorials. The complaint against the editor of the Richmond Advocate had come up before the Publishing Committee of the Virginia Conference. If there had been errors on the part of the conference, they were errors of the head and not of the heart, and they would be glad to correct them; but if these memorials were received and acted upon, a door would be opened, which would only be closed when sad experience should have compelled them to do so. A brother who had been censured had a right to appeal, and there was no other way of coming there in order. If

you permit individuals to memorialize in this manner, we shall never have it in our power to explain the charges against us.

Calls of "Question" from different parts of the house ; but

Mr. Slicer rose and said, the occasion of the controversy to which the document before them referred had excited a large amount of attention, and he should think that the brethren from Virginia ought to ask, in their own defence, to put themselves right before the Committee on Itinerancy, and to have the whole matter investigated, as it appears on the face of the journal. The brother says he has it with him, ready to produce to any one who wishes it. I suppose (continued Mr. S.) this whole matter will appear there, and when the committee have both before them, they will be able to decide whether the Virginia Conference or Dr. Waller is right. The memorial from the Providence *plantations*—I beg pardon, Providence *Conference*—has been sent to a committee. In that committee South Carolina, Virginia, and Alabama are represented, and Virginia is represented in the Committee on Itinerancy, and is competent to defend herself and her conduct before the committee. The same reason prevails in both cases. And suppose that in the committees that paper does call for an expression of their opinion, and through them of the General Conference, in reference to the baptism of children ; if Dr. Waller, a prominent member of the Virginia Conference, takes one side, and the conference the other side, it is due to the Virginia Conference, and to the subject at issue, that the weight of that opinion be given to it. Either it is right, or it is wrong, to baptize children whose parents are not members of the Church. If right, we should say so, to produce uniform practice through all the conferences. If wrong, the General Conference should give an opinion to that effect, that we may not find one preacher baptizing such children, another repulsing them. There is a discrepancy existing which ought not to be found in the Methodist Episcopal Church. If Dr. Waller is right, let the sanction of the conference be given to his position. And it can do no harm to get a resolution into the General Conference with regard to the conduct of the Virginia Conference upon the subject at issue. I therefore move that such parts of Dr. Waller's memorial as relate to the Virginia Conference be referred to the Committee on Itinerancy ; such parts as relate to baptism be referred to the Committee on Revision ; and such parts as relate to the editor of the Richmond Advocate be referred to the Book Committee.

Mr. Early explained. Mr. Slicer had misunderstood and misrepresented him. His objection was not to having the whole matter brought before them on the records, but to entertaining the present memorial, which would open the door to any number of similar irregular petitions, and from which no good would result.

Mr. Slicer said he had not misapprehended Mr. Early. That brother was trying to establish a distinction without a difference. He would not admit the memorial, but would admit the subject.

Dr. Winans was opposed to the reconsideration of the vote. He was so fortunate as not to have been mixed up with the difficulties Mr. Slicer referred to. He had no disposition to shield the Virginia Conference from blame if any attached to it, nor to withhold from Dr. Waller the right of redress for any wrongs he might have suffered. Much less was he disinclined to inquire into matters of doubt and difficulty in the Church. His objection to treating this memorial with official respect, arose from the simple fact that a solitary brother came up with charges against his conference. They might be important, but was the conference to be furnished with business by every brother who had doubts on some subjects ? That would never do. Each man would feel that he had an equal right to have all the difficulties which arose in his mind solved. Every General Conference would thus be flooded with complaints and appeals of this character. This was the sole ground on which he was for refusing official treatment to the document. If the journals were correctly kept, the whole matter would come before the committee, and if they did their duty properly, and thought it necessary, they would censure and report to the General Conference, who would also have the opportunity of fixing their censure upon the fault. And the same with the editor. That would come up in the the investigation. Or if any member thought there was necessity for action on the subject of baptism, he could bring up a resolution on the subject ; but let them not allow any one member to demand a settlement of them.

Dr. W. A. Smith said, the Virginia Conference declined no sort of investigation of her opinions or acts. He felt very much obliged to Dr. Winans for the clear and succinct view he had given of the ground they took on this question. It was not because they wished to retire from any just degree of responsibility. It would

be found that all their proceedings were upon their journal, and it would be in the power of the committee to insist upon a very careful examination. It would also be competent for any member to have special attention directed to any appeals against the Virginia Conference, or to introduce into that body, in a proper constitutional form, the whole subject, and obtain such action or decision on the part of the General Conference as they might judge necessary. There was not then the slightest excuse for travelling out of the record to get this matter before that body. They ought not to permit the memorial of a solitary member to be brought there without the authority of law. Let it be shown that any brother had a right to appeal to this body, in defiance of the method by which they were usually heard. This was an arraignment of the Virginia Conference by one who did not come there under any provision of the Discipline. If he could come under such provision, let those having the care of his case show it, and he would withdraw his opposition, and the rest of the delegation would do the same. But it could not be shown, and it had not been pretended that it could be shown. He denied the competency of the General Conference to hold the Virginia Conference to responsibility through Dr. Waller, or any other individual member of that body.

Dr. Luckey could not refrain, though so much time had already been occupied, from expressing his views with regard to the rights that seemed to be involved in this question. He knew nothing of the subject, and had not the remotest idea that the Virginia Conference would be unfavourably implicated. But the memorial came as a complaint. The question involved the inalienable right of petition and memorial. It was not so much the subject matter of the memorial that had to do with the vote for reconsideration. Dr. L. referred to the history of this nation to show that the way to flood that body with petitions was to refuse to receive them. The committee could tell at a glance whether a petition were worthy of being received. If it were not, reject it at once, and individuals would soon tire of sending any but such as were entitled to attention.

Mr. Slicer denied having the "charge" of Dr. Waller's "case," as a member seemed to have supposed.

Mr. Cartwright said, in reference to a member who had risen, if the brother would just hold still, he would soon ease him. If he thought the present motion would result to the injury of the Virginia Conference he would vote against it; but it would be to their interest. He was glad to hear the south had experienced no difficulty about baptizing children, and wished it was the case everywhere. That, however, was far from being the case; and in some conferences talented men had refused to baptize children that were not of professing parents. The editor was accountable to that body for his conduct. If he had acted right, let it be said so. He could not see why all this squeamishness was indulged in about referring the matter to the honourable committee. As to this opening the flood-gates to memorials and petitions, he did not care if they had a ship load of them. Let them be patient, and not let off so much steam. Some of the members were remarkable for steam. He for one was calm. They ought to reconsider the vote.

Mr. Finley said, that, if he was sure they could have the vote now, he would not say anything; but, if they would not come to the vote, he meant to speak also. He had got some steam, and would talk for fifteen minutes.

Cries of "Question"—"Vote," &c.

The motion for reconsideration was immediately carried.

Mr. Slicer renewed the motion for the reference of the memorial to the appropriate standing committees, and repeated his denial of having the charge of the case, as the attorney of Dr. Waller.

Mr. Drake moved the striking out of that part which referred to the administration of the Virginia Conference, as being before them, without coming in that manner.

Dr. W. A. Smith thought they were going too fast in not having the paper read. They ought to know what they were going to refer. He did not know its contents. He went on the ground of principle alone. He suspected it was not of a very pleasant character. He could not consent to refer it without knowing what it was. He called for the reading.

Dr. Luckey hoped he would withdraw that motion, but Dr. Smith would not consent.

Dr. Durbin moved that the reading be dispensed with.

Bishop Soule thought it would be best for the conference to hear it read made complaints, which he recapitulated, against the conference and the editor.

Dr. Durbin was still more inclined to dispense with the reading. Dr. Waller had not given notice of complaint to the annual conference, and it did not come from them as a body.

Dr. Smith said the complaint had been made to the Virginia Conference, and they had decided against it.

Dr. Durbin resumed. And must he come here to review it? It had been well said, that if every member can come thus, there will be no end to these complaints. It ought not to be read or referred, and he thought the brethren could reach the point without exposing the conference to this difficulty. The committee could review the case of the Virginia Conference; the other had been reviewed. Baptism was a question of doctrine. It ought to be heard there very cautiously. They would be opening a door they might not be able to close when they wished it.

Mr. Finley moved that the whole matter lie on the table, and Dr. Durbin withdrew his motion.

Mr. Finley then moved that it lie on the table, and sleep there for this very reason, that there was a proper way for a man to complain, and proper tribunals. He understood that the complaint had already been made before the proper tribunal, and not sustained.

A delegate inquired, whether this course could be pursued?

The President decided that it could.

Mr. J. T. Peck said, a paper could be referred on a mere analysis of its contents; the object of referring being to get at its contents more fully.

Mr. Lee (editor of the *Richmond Christian Advocate*) claimed the indulgence of the conference. He had been sitting there under considerable embarrassment during this discussion, and he wished to state a simple fact. He had become so accustomed to having charges from Dr. Waller preferred against him before the Virginia Conference, that he went there annually expecting to meet them. He had been tried repeatedly, and acquitted in every instance by his brethren. He felt it due to himself that the conference should know this, and thereby understand that this was no new thing with them in Virginia.

Mr. Griffith hoped the motion would prevail. As an itinerant preacher, Dr. Waller stood in a certain relation to this body. The Discipline defined the rights and privileges of each member, and pointed out the constitutional mode by which he might obtain redress under grievances. But had he come there constitutionally? According to the directions of the book? Where was the provision in the Discipline which secured a member of an annual conference a right to petition that body individually? Our people have such a right—but that was another question. In this matter there appeared to be at the worst a mere difference of opinion. He hoped further time would not be consumed. They had had enough of it already.

The motion to lay on the table was lost, and Dr. Durbin's motion to dispense with the reading was renewed, and prevailed.

Dr. Durbin moved that the various references be taken up singly.

The reference of that portion which related to the Virginia Conference to the Committee on Itinerancy prevailed.

On the motion to refer that portion which related to the editor, to the Committee on the Book Concern—

Mr. Lee explained. He did not say that this particular charge had been before the Virginia Annual Conference. They were so frequent that he did not know which had been preferred, and which had not. He had received a letter from Dr. Waller informing him that he was going to memorialize the General Conference on a subject in which he (Mr. Lee) was interested, and desired him to bring the documents to sustain such allegations. He did not know the charge, and did not bring the documents, but left that for him to do.

Mr. Early said, that he had learned from Dr. Waller that the only personal matter in the memorial related to the editor of the *Richmond Christian Advocate*.

Dr. Durbin wished to finish what he was saying. If it were not the same complaint, he should still be opposed to the reference. It would be a precedent for any member to bring in complaints against any one he pleased. They ought not to refer it.

Mr. Slicer wished to say that he did not think the doctrine held on this subject was tenable. Suppose the brother had been tried twenty times, was he not the officer of this body, and by his election answerable to them? The question was not respecting brother Lee, but the editor of the *Richmond Christian Advocate*; not brother Lee as a man, a Christian, or minister, but simply as an editor, and the

manner in which he had discharged his duty. It was perfectly competent for this body to hear complaints against any of its officers. Suppose he had attacked him (Mr. S.) as an officer of that body, was he to be screened from the complaint which he might lay against him before that body? Majorities can and do control; but majorities are not always so lenient as they might be, and had he not a right to arraign the brother complained of? Might not his administration of the affairs go before the Book Committee? Brothers Sandford and Lane, and other officers of the General Conference, had in their acts, to pass in review before their committee. This General Conference may see cause fully to acquit the brother, and, by a unanimous vote of the conference, request him still to continue the duties of his office, or otherwise. He held a very responsible position. He had to express the opinions of this body to the American people—to promulgate views for which they, as a body, were responsible. His were the acts of the conference's agent, and the present motion had reference, not to his character, but to the discharge of his duties.

Dr. Durbin said, the doctrine of Mr. Slicer was correct, but it was necessary to show that Dr. Waller had come here by appeal. If he were dissatisfied with the conduct of the Virginia Conference, he ought to have signified his intention to appeal; and it was for that reason that he (Dr. Durbin) objected to its official recognition.

Mr. Lee wished a moment's leave to address the conference; and Bishop Waugh said that, probably, as Mr. Lee was interested in this matter, the conference would grant him that indulgence, though it was a departure from the rule.

Mr. Lee said he agreed with Mr. Slicer perfectly, and hoped he had not been understood as shunning an investigation. He was not only willing, but desirous that the matter should go before the committee. It would there be found, perhaps, that it was because he had chosen to act, not as an individual, but as the officer of the General Conference, that these charges had been brought against him. He desired the Book Committee and the General Conference to know the whole matter, and if all could be spread out there, he should not shrink from a full investigation. He hoped it would go to the committee, and while he expected to meet at his own conference these several allegations, he hoped that this General Conference, at least, would endorse his administration. He had no objection to the reference—he courted it.

That part of the memorial relating to the editor was then referred to the Book Committee. It was then moved that that part which related to baptism be referred to the Committee on Revision.

Dr. Bond said he must speak on that subject as a constitutional question. He objected to the reference on the ground that the General Conference had no control over it. One of the restrictive articles imposed on this conference by the general convention of preachers, when they constituted this body, prohibited them from altering, changing, or modifying our doctrines. Why then refer the subject to a committee when they had no control over it? If, said Dr. B., it is inquired whether we have a right to baptize children, that is provided for in the doctrine of our Church. They could not change the doctrines in the annual conference, nor can you do it here with all your potency, for they are placed beyond your reach. Though all should recommend it, then, you could not do it. Then why refer it? It will go out to the world that we are reconsidering our doctrines, and that we do not consider our doctrines established. These doctrines, however, have been settled a long time, and we have prospered under them too long to alter, change, or modify them. I hope, therefore, that you will not refer them, for, certainly, you have no control in the matter.

Mr. Slicer was opposed to Dr. Bond's views. What he had said was very well in its place, if there were one syllable in the articles of religion on the subject, but unfortunately for the argument, in Article 25 there was not one word on the subject. As I understand the restrictive rules, continued Mr. S., they refer to the articles of religion, and if the doctor will put his finger on that part which treats of baptism of the children of parents who are not believers, I will yield the point. But for want of that there is no force in the remarks made by Dr. Bond. And it will be remembered that those restrictive rules do not prohibit expression of opinion by resolution or otherwise. The conference eight years ago decided that probationers should be baptized before they were received into full connection. It cannot now be said that we are about to revise our doctrines—we leave the 25th Article untouched. When we send this matter to the committee, and get a resolution reported

from them favourable or antagonistic, no doubt the vote thereon would determine the practice, even as far as Texas. I shall feel myself bound to respect the decision of the General Conference, and the question will not be settled until there is some distinct and well-defined form adopted.

Dr. W. A. Smith was much obliged to Dr. Bond for the view he had given them of the subject, and asked the calm and kind consideration of the conference on the subject. It was a most important one, and the very fact referred to went to confirm the truth of this position. Time after time they had violated these constitutional restrictions, and were in a way to do it now, and by what seemed to be a plan of circumvention. Whether that were intended or not, it was the practical result of it. The conference could not change, alter, or modify the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church. If they could meet together, and say by resolution, This is Methodist doctrine, or that is Methodist doctrine, why then they had the power to change the doctrines to any extent whatever. He disclaimed the right to refer the subject to the action of any committee at all. If otherwise, they were no longer bound by any restriction at all, and it would be in fact saying to their people that they meant to do as they pleased, without any regard to constitutional restrictions. There was another and an important consideration. There was scarcely a point of doctrine or discipline on which some one did not want information. Memorials of this nature had been presented over and over again, and had never before been referred to a committee. He remembered the first General Conference in 1832, when a similar memorial was presented, and it was decided that the conference could not, with propriety, decide upon either doctrine or discipline by entertaining such memorial, but by the administration of the different preachers, sustained by the bishops, and seconded by the General Conference. If their rules were not plain, let them be made so, and not be constantly introducing resolutions by way of interpretation and explanation, and thus throwing open the door to such memorials without limit or restriction; he hoped that with this view, they would conclude they had no right to touch the subject at all.

Mr. Ames said, the 17th article in the articles of faith had this language, "The baptism of children is to be retained in the Church." And the conference had no authority to act in this matter. As to any expression of opinion as to what the article was meant to convey that would be a mere nullity.

Mr. Dow said, that article must be retained in the Church, and the doctrine must be allowed to stand as it at present stood.

Mr. P. P. Sandford said, this question ought to be intelligibly settled. It was important for the General Conference to understand the subject better than they now understood it. Brother Dow had said in part what he rose to say. The question was not, whether they should explain or revise their doctrines. It was a question of administration of discipline on the part of the ministers. It was a fact that had come to their knowledge through this memorial, that there were errors on the part of some ministers respecting this subject; and the conference had a right to inquire whether the brethren do conform to the Discipline. This they could do without touching the articles of religion, except so far as to explain their administration by them. From what he could learn of the memorial, and the statements of brethren on the subject, he should judge that some one had departed from the rule with respect to the administration of Christian baptism. It was a matter of great importance, and they ought to guard against any improper person receiving that holy sacrament at the hands of their ministers; those who want information come up to the General Conference as the guardian of the administration of all its ministers, and they ought therefore to take the matter into consideration, and inquire whether the practice contradicted the rule. He wished to make some remarks on an act of the General Conference, which had been severely censured there, and unjustly. (Call to order.) He was in order. He was replying to an argument which had involved the General Conference in severe censure. The point was this. The General Conference had determined that all probationers should be baptized, and that that was unconstitutional he had yet to learn. If the General Rules were examined, they would be found to require that every member of the Church attend to ALL the ordinances of God. Now, no Methodist preacher would deny that baptism was an ordinance of God. By this it was made the imperative duty of every man and woman to be baptized. Some of their ministers had lost sight of this obligation, and the conference was not censurable for insisting upon the baptism of all probationers before they entered into full connection, for the obligation by their constitution was always binding.

SATURDAY, MAY 4.

Communication from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.

Dr. Bangs presented a paper, purporting to be an official communication from the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Upper Canada. It was read. It proposed to renew the offices of friendly reciprocity between that body and the General Conference. It affirmed that the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada adhered to the doctrines, usages, and ecclesiastical polity, originally set on foot in Canada by the Methodist ministers; and referred the General Conference to several delegates, who had been appointed to represent the body.

Dr. Bangs moved that the brethren appointed by the said Church delegates to this conference be recognized, and invited to take seats.

Mr. J. T. Peck moved to lay the resolution on the table, and make it the special order of the day for Monday morning, immediately after the reading of the journals.

MONDAY, MAY 6.

Dr. Bangs moved that the brethren appointed by the Canada Methodist Episcopal Church, whose Address he presented on Saturday, be recognized, and invited to take their seats in the conference.

Mr. J. T. Peck said that perhaps the minutes on this subject for the year 1836 had better be read, that they might know what was the action of the conference on a similar proposition made at that time.

The secretary explained, that by order of the conference the journals for that year were placed in the charge of the book agents, but he had sent for them.

Dr. Bangs thought that as he made the motion, it was proper that he should assign his reason for so doing. He did not know, however, whether it would not be more proper to refer the subject to a committee. The same body had made a similar application in 1836. The question was then discussed, and opposed, because the information before the conference, as to the manner in which they were organized, was but imperfectly understood, and that conference did not decide *yea* or *nay*, but left it an open question. He had searched for the report of that committee, but had not yet been able to find it. He thought, however, it was not the business of the conference to enter into the matter of their organization, or anything of that sort. The body in question embrace all the fundamental doctrines of our Church, and profess to believe in our episcopacy. He did not understand the application to be for anything more than this—a mere friendly interchange one with the other. The conference had already recognized the other brethren from Canada; very properly so, he thought; and yet they differ from us much more than these brethren do. It is well known that some years ago they were connected with the Wesleyan Conference, which connection had since been dissolved by a vote of that conference. They had but one order of ministers, and in this respect agreed with the English Wesleyans. But still we had always felt it our duty to keep up a friendly intercourse with both the English Wesleyans and the Canada Conference, without presuming to inquire whether their orders and system were exactly as we would wish. That is an internal regulation of their own. Just in the same way the United States act toward other nations, when they are called upon to acknowledge their independence. They only inquire, Have they an independent existence? And such ought our inquiry to be with reference to every Church that wishes to exchange fraternal relations with us—Are they orthodox, and have they an independent existence? Suppose the Presbyterians or the Episcopalians wished to exchange courtesies as fellow-Christians—if we believe in the orthodoxy of their sentiments, the evangelical nature of their principles, we should receive them and give them a friendly invitation to take a seat with us. This was the principle we ought to go upon in this case. However, he might be mistaken in his views, and was not anxious about the matter. They come to us under the influence of just principles and Christian feelings, the same as the other brethren do, and he saw no reason why the General Conference should receive the one and reject the other.

Dr. Luckey would second the motion of reference to a committee. The subject was unfolding points that would require some time for their discussion. He perfectly accorded with the remarks of Dr. Bangs, and would extend the hand of fraternal correspondence and friendship to any evangelical Christian denomination when they came in proper form. But there was a principle involved in this which the conference did not seem to apprehend. These brethren came as the legitimate

Methodist Episcopal Church in Upper Canada—not as having fraternal relation to that body, whom the conference had already recognized, but to supplant that body—practically to take the place of that body. If they did not come as such, he had no objection to receiving them. The history of the past would show that the conference could not recognize both these bodies as they each claimed to be recognized. He was willing to recognize these delegates as brethren, but not as the Methodist Episcopal Church who went out from them and inherited the property, &c., of that body. On no condition could he do this, and thus displace the body already recognized, and yet he hoped that they would be received and treated as brethren.

Mr. Ninde was opposed to referring the matter to a committee. There could be but two objects for so referring. One, that they might definitely arrange this plain question, and the other to prevent discussion, and give the weight of the committee to the question before it came into conference. The subject, however, would be discussed. Men of strong minds and warm hearts were among them who would take up that question as strenuously as any other; and it would afford more satisfaction to the conference, and be more respectful to the delegates, to have the subject directly before them.

Mr. Reed said, if the question were now properly before them on its merits, he would make some remarks upon it. But, as the motion before them was for referring it to a committee, he thought upon the whole that course would be the best. It would save time and discussion. If put into the hands of a judicious committee, and they took in all the circumstances, and reported early, it would be the best. But, if the question of organization were before them, he thought he could say something that would have weight in the minds of the conference.

Mr. Covel thought the whole of the circumstances could only be developed by a judicious committee, and perhaps the conference, when they had heard all, might act very differently to what they would at present.

Mr. Cartwright could not, for the life of him, see the propriety of referring this to a committee. It was altogether vain for brethren to think they could give this question the go-by. It could not be done. And the report of a committee would elicit as much discussion as the question would now. It was not worth while to blink the question. They were prepared to meet it in open conference and open discussion without this reference. If light and information on the subject were to be had, let the conference have them. They desired and wanted them, and did not expect to get them by referring to a committee. They wanted them in open conference. If the brethren had a right to be recognized, let them be; but if otherwise, say so.

Mr. Finley objected to a reference. These brethren were waiting to be recognized. If the matter were referred to a committee, they might not report for a week or two, and this business would be suspended, while these brethren were waiting here. If not recognized, they might wish to return home. He had no idea that a reference to a committee would expedite the matter, and he hoped the conference would settle it now.

Mr. Ferguson thought the reason assigned by Dr. Luckey for its going into committee was a reason against that course. If family quarrels and internal troubles had crept in among these Churches, he thought that was a reason for taking up the matter in full conference, as the committee might, to some extent, pledge themselves one side of the question.

Mr. J. T. Mitchell thought, if they took action at all in the matter, they could not avoid mixing themselves up in these family quarrels. In no country had the Methodist conferences recognized more than one body in one country as Methodists. The British Conference had recognized the Upper Canada Conference. They wanted full information, which, perhaps, they could not get in open conference. He would amend the resolution by adding instructions to report without delay.

Mr. Griffith was a member of the committee to whom the similar application in 1836 was confided. To the best of his recollection, there were found to be such capital defects in their organization in the first place, that the committee could not recommend their being recognized. There was also such a state of things existing among the contending parties—lawsuits pending, and such a spirit of litigation and strife, that the conference refused to settle their disputes; and having previously recognized the Wesleyan Canada Conference, they refused to recognize the others until they went home and settled their differences.

Mr. M'Ferrin was in favour of a reference. To go into the history of the Churches in Canada would take a long time. There was the Wesleyan Methodist Church,

the Methodist Episcopal Church, &c. We may have recognized the body which the British Conference had refused to recognize. Let it go to a committee who would present the subject in a tangible form before the conference.

Mr. Ryerson, one of the delegates from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada, wished to correct an erroneous impression which might arise from what had been said by the brother from Tennessee, about the opposition between the two connections—the British Conference, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada. Though there might be a difference between the two connections with regard to certain local matters, there was none with regard to the legitimacy of the body he represented. The British Conference never had denied nor proposed to deny the Wesleyan Methodist Canadian Church, as such legitimately. There was a union effected in 1833; and in the years 1839–40 certain differences of opinion on certain questions, mainly on the clergy reserve question, arose. They were of opinion that the course the Canadian Church pursued was incompatible with the course pursued from the commencement; and informed them that if they pursued that course, they could not continue the union between the two connections. The British Conference withdrew from that connection, but had never denied that their Canadian brethren were a conference of the Methodist Church, or composed a part of the Wesleyan body. They had the strongest invitations to send delegates to the British Conference. He (Mr. R.) had received several invitations within the last six to eighteen months to this effect. But would they recognize any of the parties who had separated from them in this or any other country? Certainly not. And they would be as much surprised at the recognition of such parties by this conference as they would if this conference were to recognize the Ranters or Bible Christians as a part of the Wesleyan Methodist societies of England. He exceedingly regretted that Messrs. Ritchie and Case were not here, for they entertained the same opinion with himself on this subject. They were the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada, and the difference was only on some local questions; but this was not the case with other separate bodies, however specious might be their pretensions.

Mr. M'Ferrin said this was the very thing they wanted; they desired light on the subject.

Bishop Soule said he had no disposition whatever to offer a word on this question, so long as the subject of recognition was not directly before the conference. That question could not pass before the conference without eliciting remarks from him, if permitted. He rose now only fully to ratify the observations of brother Ryerson with respect to the friendly relations now existing between the British Conference and the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada. He knew this to be the case. The position in which he was placed in England brought this subject before him. He had an interview with a very important committee, being requested by some friends in Canada to interest himself on the subject. If this conference thought there was a disunion between them, they laboured under an entire mistake. They were as much recognized as members of the great Wesleyan family as that General Conference.

Mr. J. T. Peck said, from the interest he felt in that question, he should have preferred going into the discussion now. The chief elements were before them; but as they seemed unwilling to go into it now, he hoped they would refer it at once.

It was then referred to a committee of five.

Proposal to give instructions to the Committee on Slavery.

Dr. W. A. Smith moved the following resolution:—

“Resolved, That the committee to whom the memorials on slavery are referred, be, and hereby are, requested to report directly on the points, the alleged facts and arguments submitted by the memorialists, and present their report as soon as practicable.”

In moving the adoption of the resolution he said that, ever since 1832, they had been flooded with memorials from annual conferences, quarterly conferences, and private individuals of the Methodist body in the eastern and northern states, and some from the north-western. With regard to the memorials abstractedly considered, the simple fact of memorials with names attached being presented, that was, in itself, a matter of very trifling character, and one that, of itself, would be unworthy of a moment's notice, for it was well known that those memorials, of themselves, only showed the active interest of the Methodist ministers in the subject,

and were no indication of the feelings and opinions of the people on the question. He had come to the knowledge of a fact on this subject that was deserving of being known. A minister from the south-west visited one of the eastern states, and the ministers in the place, so delicately related on the subject of slavery, could not open their pulpits to him, nor go to hear him when preaching. They said the popular sentiment of the Church was against it, and this continued until the people themselves demanded that the churches should be opened, and this minister heard. He drew large congregations in the place, while the ministers still held off. And this goes to show what will probably be found to be true, that all this stir and interest is among Methodist ministers, and not among the body of the people of the M. E. Church. This reminded him of a case he once knew of—a memorial coming up from a certain district, the presiding elder of which wanted to carry the point on which the memorial was founded, and went round, and got as many signatures as suited his purpose. The memorial was therefore, in reality, only the wish of the presiding elder. The following case had been related to the speaker. It was stated that, in Albany, five hundred signatures could be got within a given time in that city to a memorial, or petition, to hang a certain respectable minister of the place. Five hundred dollars were staked upon the issue, and the party went out and brought in the petition to that effect, signed by five hundred persons! within the given time.

He was sorry these memorials taught the lesson they did, that there were so many who were rabid on this subject. They of the south could get as many as they pleased of a contrary character, but they had not thought proper to offend the feelings of the conference by adopting such a course; or otherwise they could get them with strong arguments, and abounding with insulting epithets and degrading remarks, calculated to arouse the feelings of the eastern and northern brethren. But they were above it, superior to it, and would scorn to stoop to so contemptible a method of defending their position. It was not, however, without design and ultimate effect that this course of the memorialists was pursued. And what was the design? Let them review the operation of this subject, and the design would be made plain. It had been the custom to refer papers on the subject of slavery to the slavery committee. And what had been the action of that committee? Why, it had altogether avoided the issue raised, and had attempted to settle the issue between anti-slavery men and the ultra abolitionists of the north, as if there had been no representation of the south. There were three parties: the ultraists of the north, the anti-slavery men, and *what they call* the pro-slavery men. These anti-slavery men had assumed to be conservatives—to stand between the two other parties; and, assuming that right, had asked to be chairmen of this committee, and to manage the whole matter. And he was sorry to say that the southern men generally had been quieted by this, and had permitted such conservatives to manage their interests. This never had been by his consent, and never would be while he kept his present mind. These conservatives were something like the cabs of this city—take the horse out, and they always let down on the same side. Look at their reports, and the resolutions they propose, and say if they go to settle the real issues of the question. No! they staved off the real question: in the meantime the memorialists continued to dose them with their memorials, read on the floors of the conference. They thus sought, to dodge the question, while they plied their arguments by constantly reading memorials against southern slaveholders, and there was no argument heard on the real merits of the case whatever. And when attempts were made to get a hearing on the part of the southern members, with what success, he begged to ask, had they been attended? He had never known but one solitary instance in which they had been calmly and patiently heard; that was when Dr. Capers addressed them. They were assailed with calls to order, cries of "Your fifteen minutes are out," though that time had been extended again and again; and thus they were dogged into silence, and the true ground taken by the south had never been fully heard on the floor of that conference.

These memorialists come, asking what? Why, that the resolution on coloured testimony shall be rescinded. Let the General Conference meet this question fairly, and say whether it shall be so or not. These memorials contain violent and unwarrantable attacks upon a missionary secretary because he is a slaveholder: let the conference meet this question also full in the face. And they contain similar attacks upon Bishop Andrew, for the same reason: let them meet that fairly and candidly. They ask, in effect, that a rule be adopted, or such measures taken, as should exclude all slaveholders from the communion of the Church. He wished

that question also to be met and settled, because the southern ministers no longer wished to be embarrassed with the subject, and afflicted in their feelings by the reproaches and attacks of the northern brethren. If the mind of the General Conference be against the south on this subject, let them say so like honest, straightforward men, and the south would love them the better for it; or, if otherwise, let them speak out, that they might understand the matter. They could not be trifled with, by being dodged in this way, any longer. He represented, he believed, his southern brethren in this expression of sentiment, and called upon the conference to meet the question fully, freely, and candidly. It ought no longer to be avoided.

Mr. Crandall said he did not disagree with the brother who had just sat down, as to the course that ought to be taken by the committee on this question, and he trusted they would present it in that form before the conference. The memorialists were sincere in sending their petitions to this body. With reference to the New-England Conferences, he could answer for it that the ministers did not take the lead, but the members: the ministers had not kept pace with the people, and were not sufficiently abolitionists for them. He denied that the brethren on the other side had not had a patient hearing, and he presumed the brother would not deny that he had had a patient hearing that morning.

Mr. Dow denied the heavy charge against the north-eastern and northern brethren, implied in the remarks about getting names to petitions.

Mr. Slicer claimed to be of the conservatives, who were said to have dodged the question, and he denied the one-sided action alleged by the brother from Virginia. The action of the General Conference and committees for the last twenty years had been decidedly conservative—the Discipline of the M. E. Church was conservative. It did not say, in the language of the ultras on one side, that slavery is a great national and social blessing; nor on the other, that slaveholding, under all circumstances, was a sin against God, excluding a man from the sacraments of the Church: from the kingdom of grace and glory: nor that money, the result of slave-labour, should not go to the missionary treasury, and that it would be polluted by contact with money obtained from such sources: nor that the heathen must be without the means of grace and a living ministry, unless that ministry could be maintained by contributions having no connection with slavery. The slaveholders would have great difficulty in any attempt suddenly, promiscuously, and instantaneously to free themselves from this incumbrance. There was a time when the trade in slaves was in the hands of northern capitalists, some of whose present possessions were the price of blood—when the man-hunter and trader wrested from the hearth-stones of their parents the helpless and weeping children. Now the south did not seek the confiscation of that property; they only asked that the evil should be allowed to work its own results under the auspices of divine Providence. Revealed truth, acting on the public mind, to the promulgation of which the Methodist ministry had largely contributed, had done much in bettering the condition of the southern slaves, and that improvement would have advanced far beyond its present point, but for this continual agitation. Agitate—agitate—agitate—only threw difficulties in the way of the manumission they were praying for.

The conference of 1836 said in effect, “Hands off”—the responsibility was with the slave states, and whenever irritated and chafed feelings were allowed to exist between the north and south, they should soon be compelled to part, and it would be the death-knell of the republic—break down the fences of the constitution, and let in the most disastrous consequences and results. If the brethren from the north speak for the people, they were entitled to be heard calmly and temperately. He cautioned the brethren against mixing up the question of ardent spirits with this subject. He had no doubt that the rule of Mr. Wesley would have been altered before this, but for being mixed up with this unfortunate question.

Mr. Cass complained of the remarks of Dr. Smith in reference to the respect to which memorials were entitled, and denied the implication therein conveyed against his brethren and himself. They had taken high and holy ground. They denied the right of property in man. He maintained that the people thought and felt strongly on the subject. They were well informed, and understood their own action in this matter. He was not a conservative, nor in his view was their Discipline conservative.

Mr. Green said he was one of the committee alluded to, and acknowledged the right of the conference to instruct that committee in their duty. They had not reported yet, and conference could not say what they would report, but they should say fairly, and freely, and candidly, what they had to say.

Mr. Adams thought it was due to those whom they represented to throw back the

unpleasant imputations cast upon the northern portions of the churches. He hoped all the delegates would do so. As ministers they had been pushed on to the consideration of the subject by the people. He threw back the imputation.

The resolution was laid on the table by a vote of 83 to 78.

TUESDAY, MAY 7.

Appeal of Francis A. Harding.

The appeal of Francis A. Harding, against his suspension by the Baltimore Conference, was taken up.

Dr. W. A. Smith, of Virginia Conference, conducted the appeal on the part of Mr. Harding. Mr. Collins had charge of the case on behalf of the Baltimore Conference.

The secretary then read from the journal of the Baltimore Conference the proceedings in the case, to the effect, "that the name of Francis A. Harding having been called, the presiding elder said that he had by marriage become connected with slavery."

"Mr. Steele moved the reference of the matter to a committee of five, which was adopted."

"The committee reported that Mr. Harding had become possessed of five slaves: one named Harry, aged 52; one woman, named Maria, aged 50; one man, named John, aged 22; a girl, named —, aged 13, and a child, aged 2 years; and recommended the following preamble and resolution for adoption:—

"Whereas, the Baltimore Conference cannot, and will not, tolerate slavery in any of its members,—

"Resolved, That brother Harding be required to execute a deed of manumission, and have the same enrolled in the proper court, and give to this conference, during this present session, a pledge that this shall be done during the present year."

"Brother Harding having stated the impossibility, with his views, of his compliance with this resolution, Mr. Collins moved for his suspension until he gave sufficient assurance of his compliance."

"The matter was again referred to a committee of five, for further investigation, who reported that they had entirely failed to induce brother Harding to comply with the wishes of the conference."

"Brothers Collins and Emory moved the following resolution, which was adopted:—

"Resolved, That brother Harding be suspended until the next annual conference, or until he assures the episcopacy that he has taken the necessary steps to secure the freedom of his slaves."

Bishop Soule. The question will arise, according to the Discipline, whether the General Conference will admit this appeal.

On motion the appeal was admitted.

Bishop Soule called upon the appellant to state the ground of his appeal.

Dr. Smith said,—I appear before the General Conference, at the instance of the appellant, to state his case to the best of my ability. In entering upon this duty, especially as the case involves the question of slavery, it is proper that I should make some preliminary remarks personal to myself.

I am aware, from the use that has been made of my name within the last few years in various journals in different sections of the country, it is reasonable to suppose that I entertain personally hostile feelings toward those who differ from me. I wish to disavow it. My own opinions on the subject have been made up for years. But these opinions have never been permitted with me, so far as I am competent to understand myself, to originate unchristian feelings to any honest man who differs with me. I have always held myself to be, and now do, an anti-slavery man—not, however, an abolitionist in any sense of the word. And in this I differ not from my Methodist brethren in the ministry and out of it. The sense which I attach to anti-slavery will, in the course of the observations I shall make on the merits of this case, be explained. In the present case I do not know if I am not called upon to represent an abolitionist, though a southern man myself. I do not symbolize with the brother on the subject of slavery. I differ with him, almost as widely as I do from any abolitionist, north or east. And I do, sir, with the more cheerfulness enter upon the defence of this case, being actuated by a sense of justice, because I believe, whatever may have been the design, (and I have not a solitary

doubt that the design was a good one,) this brother has been wronged, and deeply wronged by the decision in his case.

I learn from the journals of the Baltimore Conference, and from his own statement, that he entered as a probationer in the ministry in 1839, and in 1843 was ordained, in the regular course, an elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church. On the 8th of February, in 1844, he became connected by marriage with Miss Swan, in the state of Maryland. At the session of the conference in March last he was called up for examination, and from the journal of that body I learn his presiding elder stated, that, by his late marriage, he had become connected with slavery. The conference appointed a committee to investigate the subject. That committee reported. Their report you have heard read; it requires him to pledge himself that, during the year, he would execute a deed securing to the slaves their liberty. These slaves belonged to his wife by the demise of her parents. Let that be distinctly remembered. I understand that brother Harding, for specific reasons, refused to comply with the decision of the conference. It is due to him to state, that I could have wished the journals of the conference had been kept as the rule requires they should be kept; that all the questions and all the answers put to the accused had been matter of record. This, however, is not the case. The proceedings of the conference alone, so far as regards the resolutions moved and adopted, make up the journals of that conference, and by consequence we have not the legal, authorized testimony, required by the book of Discipline. I must, therefore, sir, rely for the facts that are important to a due consideration of this case, upon the correct and honest memory of the representatives of the Baltimore Conference. I therefore say that if, in relating anything of importance, not on the records of the conference, I should be found in their judgment in error—for it is not my purpose to misrepresent the history of this case—they will point out the error. I understand from the individual himself, and from some members of that conference, that when the decision was read, he refused at once to comply with the demand of the conference on the following grounds:—

First. That by the nature of the laws of the state of Maryland he did not become the owner of the slaves. They were held by his wife by descent from her parents, and that he had therefore no right to execute the deed required by the conference.

Secondly. That if it were not so, the laws of the state of Maryland do not permit the liberated slave to enjoy liberty, and that, therefore, under the rule of Discipline he was not required to comply with the condition. He maintained, therefore, that the pledge was impracticable, and contrary to the rule of Discipline; and, thirdly, that it would be in its practical results inhuman. And why? Because the demand if carried out by him, without the consent of these slaves, would separate parents from children and other friends, which, without their consent, he, as a conscientious man, could not consent to do.

But while he thus refused a compliance with the proposed condition, he nevertheless tendered to the conference the following pledge, in his own name and that of his wife, that he would have them removed to the colony in Africa, or to any free state in the Union, where they might be permitted to enjoy their freedom, at any time when he could do so with their consent. But pledge himself to fulfil the condition made by the conference, with or without their consent, and thus sever the dearest ties on earth, he, as a humane and conscientious man, could not consent to do. I am now relating what the journals of the Baltimore Conference should have shown. Let the conference understand that I am repeating the pledges made by this brother in my own language; but I submit it to the delegation whether I give substantially the pledges he gave. If not, correct me on the spot, and do not leave me to labour in the dark.

Mr. Griffith. I understand you to say that he gave a pledge to remove them to any free state. I have no recollection of such a pledge. If tendered, it would have been accepted, as perfectly satisfactory.

Mr. Gere. Brother Griffith may not have heard the pledge, but he did, more than once, make that pledge in the presence of the conference.

Mr. Collins. I attended to this case with great particularity, and had something to do with it. If brother Harding ever made such a pledge, it did not reach my ears. And when he said that, with the consent of his wife and the slaves, he would send them to Liberia, I asked him if that consent could be obtained, and he answered in the negative.

Mr. Gere. Brother Collins is correct in saying that consent could not be obtained; but I clearly recollect the point spoken to. He would have preferred

illustrated the whole case, proceeded to make up their report, saying that they had failed to reduce the brother to terms, though the record shows that they were appointed to *investigate* the case. Yet they report about bringing him to terms. The conference, then, on motion of brothers Collins and Emory, resolved to suspend the appellant from his ministerial standing until the next session of conference, or such time as he should give satisfaction to the episcopacy that he had secured the manumission of the slaves. From this decision, sir, brother Harding gave notice of his intention to appeal, and is now before the General Conference in prosecution of his design. I have thus gone through the statement of the case as I find it in the journals, and from oral testimony, because of the defectiveness of the journal itself.

The ground on which I rest this appeal is briefly this :

First, The appellant violated no rule of Discipline in refusing to comply with the condition of the Baltimore Conference. Secondly, But on the contrary, the rule of the Church makes provision in his favour. Thirdly, And, therefore, his suspension is unauthorized, and should be reversed.

If it be the pleasure of the conference for me to proceed in the investigation of this subject, I propose to do so; but if they think it would be more in order for the defence to respond, I am ready and willing to give place that they may do so. I do not wish to forestall, and ask no right more than to state the case, and the grounds of our appeal.

Mr. Morgan said, in reference to Mr. Gere's statement, that there had been two cases before the Baltimore Conference involving the question of slavery, those of Mr. Harding and Mr. Hansberger. Mr. Harding did consent to send his slaves to Liberia, if their consent and that of his wife could be obtained; but the other was willing to emancipate his, provided certain arrangements could be made.

Dr. Smith. The ground we take is, that the appellant violated no rule of Discipline; on the contrary, the rules of the Church make provision in his favour, and therefore, his suspension by the Baltimore Conference is unauthorized and should be reversed. Because, under the law of Maryland, in which state he married, he did not come, by his marriage, to be the owner of the property which fell to his wife. As, therefore, he was not the owner of a single slave, he could not manumit one. The conference required an impossibility. In proof thereof I will read an opinion of Judge Key. I suppose that this conference would have no hesitation about receiving the opinion of that gentleman. He says:—

"The Reverend Mr. Harding having married Miss Swan, who, at the time of her marriage, was entitled to some slaves, I am requested to say, whether he can legally manumit them or not? By an act of Assembly, no person can manumit a slave in Maryland: and by another act of our Assembly, a husband has no other or further right to his wife's slaves than their labour, while he lives. He can neither sell nor liberate them. Neither can he and his wife, either jointly or separately, manumit her slaves, by deed, or otherwise. A reference to the Acts of Assembly of Maryland will show this.

EDMUND KEY.

"Prince George County, April 25th, 1844."

I would also refer to the laws of the state of Maryland, chap. 293.

"Section 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland*, That from and after the passage of this act, any married woman may become seized or possessed of any property, real or of slaves, by direct bequest, demise, gift, purchase, or distribution, in her own name, and as of her own property; *provided*, the same does not come from her husband after coverture."

Now, sir, by this late act of Maryland, a woman can become an owner of property in her own name, though married.

"Sec. 2. *And be it enacted*, That hereafter, when any woman possessed of a property in slaves shall marry, her property in such slaves, and their natural increase, shall continue to her, notwithstanding her coverture, and she shall have, hold, and possess the same as her separate property, exempt from any liability for the debts or contracts of the husband."

Now, from this section, we perceive that the property of a woman does not pass to the husband, as by the original law, and as is probably the case in other states of the Union.

"Sec. 3. *And be it enacted*, That when any woman during coverture shall become entitled to, or possessed of slaves by conveyance, gift, inheritance, distribution, or otherwise, such slaves, together with their natural increase, shall enure and belong

to the wife in like manner as is above provided as to slaves which she may possess at the time of marriage.

"Sec. 4. *And be it enacted*, That the control and management of all such slaves, the direction of their labour, and the receipts of the productions thereof, shall remain to the husband agreeably to the laws heretofore in force. All suits to recover the property or possession of such slaves shall be prosecuted or defended; as the case may be, in the joint names of the husband and wife; in case of the death of the wife, such slaves shall descend and go to her children and their descendants, subject to the use of the husband during life, without liability to his creditors, and if she die without leaving children living, or descendants of such children living, they shall descend and go to the husband."

From these we learn, that, were a husband, marrying a woman with slaves, to manumit those slaves, any person who might inherit property from his wife might make him pay for every one so manumitted, because of the injury done to them by such an act of manumission.

"Sec. 5. *Be it enacted*, That the slaves owned by a feme covert under the provisions of this act, may be sold by the joint deed of the husband and wife, executed, proved, and recorded agreeably to the laws now in force in regard to the conveyance of real estate of feme coverts and not otherwise.

"Sec. 6. *And be it enacted*, That a wife shall have a right to make a will and give all her property or any part thereof to her husband, and to other persons with the consent of the husband subscribed to said will; *provided always*, that the wife shall have been privately examined by the witnesses to her will, apart and out of the presence and hearing of her husband, whether she doth make the same will freely and voluntarily, and without being induced thereto by fear or threats of or ill usage by said husband, and says she does it willingly and freely; *provided*, that no will under this act shall be valid unless made at least sixty days before the death of the testatrix."

It is perfectly manifest that the opinion of Judge Key is correct, and that the appellant in this case did not possess the right of property in any one of these five slaves that his wife held by the demise of her parents. The Baltimore Conference said, "Manumit your slaves," thus requiring that appellant to dispose of property that did not belong to him: to set at liberty those in whom he had no right, and over whom he had no control whatever. Why, they might with equal propriety tell him to unhorse the first Methodist minister he found on the highway, and turn the horse loose beyond the power of his proper owner, or to manumit the slaves of every man in the state as a condition of holding his membership in their body. Mr. Harding had as much right to the horse, bridle, and saddle-bags of his brethren as to the slaves in question, and just as much right to every slave in the state as to these, and could with as much propriety execute a deed of manumission on their behalf. I say, then, that without doubt the Baltimore Conference required of him to do that which it was impossible for him to do. I am at a loss to know how that conference could commit such an error. It really is so marvellous that I am utterly at a loss to account for it.

Secondly, If the doctrine I have just laid down could in any sense be held as doubtful, though I cannot see how it can possibly be so held, and it should therefore be said that he had property in the slaves of his wife, then the rule of Discipline, sect. 10, pages 209, 10, makes provision in his favour.

"We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery: therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom."

Now we maintain that, under this provisional exception to the general rule of our Church, he was not required to manumit these slaves, because he could not legally effect that manumission, even if they belonged to him, in that state. Such also is expressly the meaning of the second answer:—

"When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

This is a different phraseology expressing the same idea, and has been so decided by the General Conference. A legal emancipation! What is the common-sense meaning of this? Such an emancipation as will put the slave in possession of his freedom in that state. Now could the appellant give them such liberty? I hold

and we had a right, under the circumstances, to expect that the Baltimore Conference would not thus have disregarded the decision of the General Conference. I take it upon me to say, that the decision referred to settled that point; and the appellant was not required under the laws of the state of Maryland, and under that decision upon our laws of Discipline, to manumit these slaves, because the act would not secure their freedom. I need not stop to notice, that, though that law was passed, and that report and resolution adopted for the government of the Baltimore Conference, they have never ordained these men.

Mr. Collins. That's the fact. It was no law; it was only a resolution.

Dr. Smith. We maintain, therefore, that the refusal to comply with the demand of the Baltimore Conference was no violation of the rules of Discipline, and also, that as a conscientious and humane man, Mr. Harding could do no more than he proposed to do. It is admitted by all the delegation that he was ready to send every one of these slaves, with their consent, to Liberia. What more could he do, as a humane man? Should he send them there without their consent? Should he separate parents and children and their friends, without their consent, and compel them to find refuge in the bosom of Africa? Should he have done so? He was willing so to do, *with* their consent, and I ask what more could humanity ask or Christianity require? Let me at this point briefly examine the requisitions made upon him. They wanted him to hold two of the slaves in perpetual bondage. Did you mark that? Yes! the decision of that conference required him to hold two of the slaves in perpetual bondage, one till he was 28 and two till they were 23! Now, sir, I beg leave to ask what eastern man, consistently with his principles, can vote to sustain the Baltimore Conference in this instance? Stick to your principles, abide by them, and you cannot sustain them in their action! On the other hand, Harding, on the principle of the most ultra eastern member here, pledges himself to let them go to Africa or any free state. What more could he do? What more would the laws permit him to do? And what eastern man will fail to sustain him in this? He intended this, and does now intend it, so far as he has a right to control his movements on the subject.

My third general ground is, that the spirit of our Discipline does not, any more than the letter of it, justify the Baltimore Conference in their suspension of this brother. The spirit of the Discipline is a vague term, but I may explain. I mean, then, that the general design and tendency of the rules of our Discipline on the subject of slavery do not justify that conference in their course. I hold that the rules of our Discipline on this subject are exclusively conservative. The whole Discipline is conservative, and I claim to be a conservative myself. I stand by Methodist Discipline; and if any man claims to be conservative, and will not stand on the same broad platform, I deny that he is one, and will contest it every inch. I repeat, our Discipline is conservative. Hear it. "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery? Ans. 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery." I believe it—with all my heart I subscribe to it. And I can repeat that language with a feeling that none, except those from the south, like circumstanced, can possibly do. I say it is an evil, because I feel it to be an evil. And who cannot say the same that has trod the soil of the south? It is an evil. The Discipline declares the truth, the whole truth, and so far as it relates to the case, nothing but the truth; and a truth which, from our connection with the subject, we are not ashamed to own, nor afraid to proclaim on the housetops, here or elsewhere. Is not this enough? What more can the brethren ask? What more would they ask from the south as a sacrifice on the altar of union than this broad, unqualified declaration? This, sir, is unquestionably conservatism. But, sir, it is not such conservatism as is represented by the cabs of your city, always, when the horse is taken out, letting down on one side. No, sir, that is not the principle of conservatism, for conservatism always involves principles appropriate to two sides. On the other hand, I should say that while the Discipline deprecates the evil of slavery, it requires the members of the Church within those states to conform their action to the rules or laws of those states in which they live. This is assuming the doctrine that though slavery is an evil, and a great evil, it is not necessarily a sin. There's the other side of the question. And is it not clearly so? Now, we of the south take both sides of the question—it is a great evil, *it is not necessarily a sin*; and we ask no more of you. But we maintain that it is not a sin, and we demand this concession on your part. They are conservatives who take both sides, and not those who are one-sided in their doctrine, practice, and votes.

To recur to the principles or position we have just laid down :—we say that slavery is an evil, and that southern people know and feel it to be an evil. Who knows how much the shoe pinches but he who wears it? And who more than we who have been compelled to submit to it, from our cradle to the present moment; and on whom the wrong has been inflicted by these very brethren of the north—the north, who refuse to help us in this our calamity. Who know it so well to be an evil, as they who but a few years ago were ready to take legislative action on the subject? In 1831, so rife was the popular feeling and the popular sentiment on this subject, that there is not a doubt—so sorely did we in Virginia feel the evil—that long before this day some act of gradual manumission would have passed but for that which, after all, may prove to have been the happy interference of northern abolitionists. I know this is strange ground for you to hear me take; but which I think I shall make as clear as the light of heaven to the mind of every candid hearer in this conference. We felt the evils and groaned under them so deeply, and so heartily did we long to get rid of them, that from the debates in 1831, in the Virginia legislature, and the popular sentiment expressed in the pulpit and through the press, no doubts were entertained that the state was about to adopt immediate measures for its gradual extirpation. Eighteen thousand dollars per annum were appropriated to advance the colonization interest only as an intimation that any reasonable claim for colonization upon the treasury of Virginia should be honoured. Why was it not carried out? Why, just at this juncture, when the bow of promise was beginning to span the heavens, and the long-prayed-for hour was about to come upon us in all its glory—behold this dark cloud rises in the north and east, and though but the size of a man's hand in the beginning, it increased and passed over the whole north! It flung the dark shadows of its coming events over the moral hemisphere of the south, and mantled all in sackcloth and mourning! The tide of colonization was arrested—it rolled back, and the friends of the cause were left to mourn over their disappointments. And yet in the face of all this, results have shown that while God never can direct anything that is wrong, yet his hand was in this matter, in permitting the error, or the wickedness, I will not say which, to bring about a good result. At that very time your agents in Liberia, resident coloured men, wrote back, "Stay your hand. If you are not more select in the choice of those you send here, we shall be reduced to a heathen state. Send us colonists, but send us select men. Don't send us corn-field hands—they are not fit for freedom."

This, sir, was a wise and a sage remark; not the result of profound philosophical investigation, it is true, but the spontaneous promptings of practical observation. And what is the principle on which it operates? Why, that in forming a colony you can pour into it a heterogeneous mass, only so far as it can be received into the body politic, and impart strength and vigour to the body. But if, instead of imparting strength, they give their own character to the body, the consequences will be certain ruin and destruction. I will give you an illustration. I hesitate not to say, and many will sustain me in declaring, that if the amount of vice and ignorance from Catholic Europe, and particularly Ireland, now poured like a flood into the bosom of this vast republic, had swept into the infant colonies of Jamestown or Plymouth Rock, never would you have seen this fair republic spring up, striking its roots deep in the soil, and spreading its branches from Maine to Mississippi, and from the Atlantic almost to the Pacific Ocean. But now, since this country has grown up to maturity, and taken the elevation and power of a great state, we can take in these vast crowds, and yet our political and moral character remains unharmed. The firm bases of our civil institutions are unmovable; the deep foundations of social and civil life have not been reached; and we are privileged to cherish the hope that time, in its rapid roll, will but strengthen and perpetuate our civil and religious liberty, while we continue to be an asylum for the ignorance, vice, infidelity, and what is worse than all combined, the Popery of Europe. Now, had *Liberia* been so colonized, it would have been ruined. Such a mass as Virginia was rapidly pouring into it would have reduced it to its original heathen condition. What prevented such a result? The abolition excitement, and nothing else. Thanks to them, then, that we have a colony on the coast of Africa to spread itself out, and yet become an asylum for every freed slave if he pleases to go there; and I pray God that he may speed the happy day. I am aware that our abolition brethren never intended this, and therefore they may be compared to an enemy who plunges a dagger into your side, but which only opens some dangerous abscess. And you are mistaken if you think I have any animosity against abolition brethren. I believe God will use them as instruments, bad or good, as they may be.

Now, sir, I have enlarged for a purpose which cannot fail to have been perceived. I ask, again, who are the conservatives? Those who maintain one side of the Discipline, that slavery is a great evil, but will not concede the principle that it is not necessarily a sin? or, are they the conservatives who take both sides of the book? Such is a conservative, and all who symbolize with him. I have heard a different doctrine from a very unexpected quarter. The case has been put with the abolitionists proper standing at one extreme, the southern portion of the Church standing at the other extreme, distinguished by holding this doctrine, that slavery is a great political and social blessing. Sir, did you ever hear that doctrine advocated by a southern minister of the Methodist Church in your life? I declare to you, I never heard such a doctrine before. Forty-one years have passed over my head, twenty of which have been devoted to the service of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as a southern minister, preaching to the master and the slave; and never in my life did I hear that doctrine until I heard it imputed to southern brethren on the floor of this conference, from a man, too, who claimed to be a conservative—a middle man, standing between the two extremes, like a mediator, putting his hands on both, and bidding them be reconciled. If I understand it rightly, the Discipline is conservative, because it occupies the middle ground between the two; and so stand the southern men. The difference between us and either extreme, is just the difference between plain right and plain wrong. There is a clear, bold, vigorous line of demarcation. The partition wall betwixt right and wrong is as high as heaven, and it must be scaled before an entrance can be made from the right to the wrong. If you belong to us, take the ground of the Discipline and law. You make an imaginary extremity, and then assume to yourselves to be middle men. Now on this broad platform the southern Church stands:—Slavery is a great evil, but beyond our control; yet not necessarily a sin. We must then quietly submit to a necessity which we cannot control or remedy, endeavouring to carry the Gospel of salvation to both masters and slaves.

Ultra anti-slavery men deny the great principles assumed, and maintain the doctrine that slavery is necessarily a sin under all circumstances. And now for the application of the whole subject to the case in hand. I regret to declare that it is my honest conviction, that all the action of the Baltimore Conference in this case symbolizes with the principles of ultra-abolitionism. The Discipline of the Church, I have shown, clearly recognizes this brother in the relation in which he stands to slavery. The laws of Maryland do not make him the possessor of slaves. And yet the action of the Baltimore Conference requires him to manumit them—the slaves that he never owned. A legal opinion was given in and confirmed, and yet they persisted in their demand! How could they do that on the principle of the conservative character of our Discipline? They could not, yet they did it, clearly on the doctrine that slavery is a sin under all circumstances.

The first argument brought by the advocates of this position is, that slavery is wrong in the abstract. What is slavery? Why, in its very nature it is a concrete act. What is it when taken abstractly? Why, it is the act taken away from all its circumstances. Take away from slavery all its circumstances, and how will any man predicate right or wrong of such a thing? It is neither right nor is it wrong, abstracted from its circumstances. But perhaps, in common parlance, slavery in the abstract is the simple overt act of slavery, which is inseparable from circumstances. Yet we will take it so, though it is a sort of hair-splitting business. It is then the government of man by physical force. Is it anything more? Can it possibly be anything less? And will you undertake to say that the government of man by physical force is wrong? Government by physical force! Why, the inhabitants of Sing Sing prison are detained there by physical force, and without their consent. And will you undertake to say that such control of man by physical force is wrong? I imagine, sir, that no one will say that. What is true of an abstraction in this sense? Why, that it is right or wrong according to its circumstances, as with murder. Murder itself is wrong. Murder in the abstract is neither right nor wrong. Taking life is right or wrong according to its circumstances. And if the abstract or overt act of taking life be done according to the established laws of the country, or in self-defence, it is taking life on a correct principle. If done contrary to law or with malice aforethought, it is murder, and therefore wrong. And so with slavery. It is right or wrong, to be justified or condemned, according to its circumstances.

A second argument on the abstract question is, that what is wrong in the beginning can never become right by continuance. Applied to slavery it is this. It was wrong to bring these slaves from Africa, and it can never be right to detain them.

here. This is false in principle and in practice; for if there be no prescription in politics by which things once wrong become right, then all the claims and possessions of the present generation are wrong, and to this day founded in injustice and oppression. And wherefore? Because there is scarcely a government now on the earth that has not had its origin in robbery, oppression, and wrong, more or less; and if these can never change, why the possessions of man all over the world remain held in crime to this day! Take, for example, the Norman conquest of England—held in crime as a sweep of robbery as any that ever darkened the pages of history—and as lawless a doctrine be correct, there is not a legal claim in existence in England to one foot of her soil. Take, sir, the conquest of your own country—save my own native state, and I am proud to make an exception in her favour—the Indian is the original owner of the soil from which he was driven; of the soil that gave him birth; and at this very day, the land where sleep his fathers back to unknown generations, this land is *his*, not yours; and if the principle laid down is just, give him back the rights he once enjoyed, and the land that was his dear and social home.

But, we say, that it is indispensable to the well being of human society, that there be principles of prescriptive right acknowledged and acted upon, and that the original wrong should ultimately become right, when the redress of that wrong would inflict a greater evil than the original wrong. So slavery may have had its origin in wrong, cruelty, oppression, and robbery; yet if the redress of that wrong would be a greater evil than the wrong itself, then it is to be assumed as right. And it remains with the opposition to show that the wrongs can be redressed without interfering more prejudicially with the institutions of society. Does any one doubt that the patriarch Abraham was a slaveholder, or that slavery existed among the Jews, and that, too, under the divine sanction and by divine appointment? Of that we are assured on the authority of God's word. But, then, we are sure that the Divine Being could neither appoint nor sanction anything that was in itself independently and absolutely wrong. It must, therefore, have been right, under the peculiar circumstances of Abraham and of the Jewish nation. And what was right in one instance may be right in another. What were the circumstances under which slavery was in these cases we know not—no man knows—but we are bound to allow the fact.

What was true on the subject of slavery in the days of the apostles? In Greece, at that time, there were about ninety slaves to every four hundred freemen, that is, about one-fifth of the whole population were slaves; and Rome was at that time the greatest slave-market in the world, where millions were bought and sold under the reign of the Cæsars. Now the system of slavery in those days was the most unhallowed that is recorded on the pages of history; and they must know little indeed of American slavery who put it on a footing with that of Greece and Rome. Now, if in the days of Christ it passed unreprieved, though existing in a bold and palpable form—if there were no warning epistles written to the Churches on the subject at the instance of the apostles, surely it is fair to conclude that it is not "necessarily a sin." They could not but be cognizant of its existence, since St. Paul himself recognizes the relation of master and servant or slave on the same principles that he did the civil government. This was an absolute monarchy. The lives of his subjects were at the disposal of the sovereign; St. Paul was in the hands of the civil power, and don't you suppose that he saw and felt the evils of so despotic a government? And so with slavery. The particular authority of the master over the slave was a great evil, yet Paul acknowledged both the civil government and the system of slavery. He required all Christians to submit to the civil authority, offensive as it was; and he required all masters to treat their slaves as became masters, and slaves to be obedient to their masters. What did he intend by all this? Why, that it was his duty as a minister to preach, and watch, and labour, and thus bring about that state of things in society that would best indicate the necessity for a different form of government, and a different state of society. As a private citizen he might have fallen out with the government, as a matter concerning his own personal and private feelings; but as a minister of the Church he felt it his duty to pursue that course which would make a different form of government as practicable as it is at all times desirable. So we of the south see in slavery an evil; but in the circumstances we feel justified in our course, and, indeed, cannot avoid it. And we feel that we should be doing an infinitely greater wrong by altering the condition of the slaves, under present and existing circumstances. Our duty as a Church and as ministers is to labour by preaching to bless both master and servant. Go preach among them. Get master and servant both converted, and

thus bring about a different state of things, and then a different state of society will be practicable as well as desirable, and thus, and thus only, can we occupy the broad conservative platform of our Discipline.

They affirm of slavery in the south, that its origin was wicked—that the slaves were first acquired at the expense of our brother's blood. Admit it all. Yet the hand of God is above, and it is his to overrule everything for good. Go with me to the southern plantation, where our missionaries have been preaching for years! Come with me through the length and breadth of this land! Converse with the slaves on the subject of religion, and you will find thousands "clothed and in their right minds"—happy in the love of God. Their condition is better, a thousand times better, than if they had remained in Africa. They would there have sunk lower and lower, without any knowledge of a Saviour, for there can be little doubt that had not their bondage and slavery awakened the sympathies of mankind in their behalf, there would not have been such mighty efforts to evangelize Africa and other portions of the world. They were in darkness—gross darkness; but who will not say that "the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light," and that the state of the slaves is *now* better than it was before their bondage? I feel a deep interest in this matter. I am emphatically a negro preacher. I watch over them, attend their revivals, lead their classes, and labour among them from year to year; and have a heart as full of sympathy and love for them as any man's.

What is the duty of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery? There is danger of her stepping out of the track of duty, and engaging herself in political relations, and thus becoming a politico-ecclesiastical establishment. The Christian Advocate and Journal has correctly told us that we have no right to make laws. The very day you begin to make laws, you err, and the laymen will then have a right to representation; and have it they must, and have it they shall, if it can possibly be secured to them. Your government can be defended only on the ground that you make no laws. What, then, are you to do? Just tell the people what are the plain laws of God's word. Do that, and the people will not find fault with you; partisans may, but the intelligent of other denominations, and the whole body of your own Church, will not complain of you for that. The ministers are set apart to explain religion, to enforce God's laws, and teach the doctrines of the Bible, and should let all political subjects alone. I have now had the right to vote for more than twenty years, but I have never yet exercised it. It is no part of my business to meddle with politics. I do not, however, consider my omission to vote as an example for imitation. But, in regard to the principle that governs me, I shall never reconcile it to myself to interfere with politics further than as a private citizen. I have a terrible warfare against this thing. I don't believe in this doctrine of Methodist ministers having to do with politics. The genius of our government is against it. I think that we should confine ourselves to our proper ministerial duties.

I suppose we ministers can never interfere with any legislation on political matters. And our laymen can come—(Some remarks were here lost by the reporter.) The genius of our Church government requires that we confine ourselves exclusively to spiritual matters. "My kingdom," says the Saviour, "is not of this world"—it is spiritual. Any interference by this General Conference, directly or indirectly, as an ecclesiastical council, with any political questions or relations whatever, is inappropriate to our duties, and extremely dangerous in its results. We are destined to become a great people. No human causes, that are likely to be brought to bear, can prevent our becoming the most numerous and popular branch of the American Church. (God grant that when we come to be this great people, the glory may not have departed from us!) But when this state of things shall come, what will be the condition of the country and the Church, if our ministers should not confine themselves, as ministers, exclusively to their appropriate spiritual duties, and leave the political questions and relations of the country to be managed by the laymen of the Church and other citizens? Why, sir, it is perfectly manifest, that if in that day it shall be found that the same men, *whether laymen or preachers*, who are making rules for the government of the Church, are also at the same time members of the different state legislatures, or of the general government, they will be making laws for the government of the state. With the reins of civil government in one hand, and the reins of ecclesiastical government in the other, what will be more easy than to unite both reins in one hand—or, in other words, unite Church and State? This, sir, is the unhappy result to be deprecated. It is this that makes any action of this body upon a subject purely political a just cause

of suspicion by any discriminating mind. Do not, then, complain of the south, when she admonishes you to let the subject of slavery alone, because more appropriate to the civil legislature. The Scriptures furnish you with no example of ecclesiastical legislation on the subject of slavery, although it existed in the days of Christ and the apostles, in a far more objectionable form than in the present day. The duty of the Church is plain. If you would bring around that state of things in the south, in which a different social condition will be as practicable as it is at all times, confessedly desirable, let the General Conference, let all the ministers in the Church, confine themselves to their appropriate calling—*let them preach the grace of Christ*—and they will accomplish their object.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8.

Mr. Collins, of the Baltimore Conference, commenced his reply to Dr. Smith. He said,—

I take the management of this case not without diffidence. To appear in defence of one of the oldest annual conferences in the Methodist Episcopal Church; one that has always stood by the Discipline of the Church, "in weal and wo;" that has done the utmost in her power to maintain the purity of our institutions entirely untarnished, might be considered a matter of some surprise to any man.

I am fortified, however, in the conviction that the Baltimore Conference, in this matter as in all others of her official action, is not only pure, but above suspicion; and she has her best defence when her own acts speak in their own proper language. I am aware that the delicacy of the subject has invested it with considerable interest. Slavery and abolitionism have agitated the civil and ecclesiastical tribunals of our land, and for a long time convulsed the country; and, of course, everything that has reference to slavery, or is connected with it, is a matter of peculiar interest. It is supposed, and I believe it to be the fact, that this appeal will bring up the connection of Methodism and Methodist preachers with slavery more distinctly and clearly than any other question ever brought before this conference; and I am fully aware that we shall need all the prudence, and caution, and care, and freedom from excitement, that we can possibly bring to the management of this case: and I pray God to grant us wisdom, and prudence, and discretion, that we may fall upon the best means to promote the glory of God and the welfare of his Church.

I certainly was delighted to hear many of the expressions that fell from my friend from Virginia. I must congratulate him upon his conversion, for until yesterday morning I knew not that he, or those that think with him, were to be regarded as conservative—on this question. I am delighted to hear that they are so. I listened with pleasure to the warm and ardent manner in which he admitted the doctrines of the Discipline, in regard to the great evil of slavery. I was particularly delighted at it, as well as with his declaration, that he never had heard in the south, that slavery was to be regarded as a social good, and the confirmatory response of the southern delegations. I was gratified with all that was said, but could not help thinking, for the life of me, of a certain resolution passed at the Georgia Annual Conference, that "slavery is not a moral evil!" Not a moral evil! I should like to know what kind of an evil the prosecutor considers slavery. On the floor of the General Conference of 1836 and 1840, slavery was defended by a member of his own delegation, as in accordance with the word of God. I was pleased at the remarks of brother Smith yesterday morning. I have seen a pamphlet, written by Mr. Sims, a Methodist preacher,* in which a very different view is presented to that which I was glad to hear advanced by Dr. Smith; and though he says that every man with sense enough to go to mill, would refuse to acknowledge such a sentiment, yet I know one of the most eminent of our clergy who has done so, and who had more than sense enough "to go to mill."

Still I am gratified at the change of sentiment, and at the change of *tone* still more so. There is, nevertheless, a drawback to all this; for my worthy friend in carrying out some of his abstractions, which are always doubtful in character and dangerous in issue, has involved himself in an apparent contradiction. He believes slavery to be an evil in fact, and a *great* evil; he says that the southerners are groaning under it, and that it is their affliction and sorrow; and yet contends that circumstances can make that thing good which in its commencement was evil. He deprecates the African slave trade as abominable, and the means employed to secure

* This is an error: the pamphlet referred to, though often attributed to Prof. E. D. Sims, who is a Methodist preacher, was written by A. D. Sims, Esq., a lawyer in Darlington, S. C.

slaves as vile and treacherous; but that circumstances have taken away all that was offensive in its character, until slavery, as existing now, is right. If so, I contend upon his own showing, it cannot be a great evil.

There is also another drawback. With all his strong expressions with respect to the great evil of slavery, before he got through with the "abstraction," he placed human beings on the same ground as the lands of New-England and Pennsylvania, as goods and chattels. These things detract from the warm and strong declarations of my friend on this subject. Still I will give him credit for being a conservative as far as he goes.

I shall not follow the prosecutor in all his remarks, for though I listened with much interest to his able and powerful speech—a speech that did credit to his head and heart—there was a great deal that had nothing whatever to do with the question; and if our case had had the small-pox, two-thirds of his remarks would never have caught it. They had no relation to the case at all, and do not operate except to break down the fair issue which we wish to make before this conference. I shall try to meet the case on its merits, and place the question on its true basis.

The prosecutor first complained of our journal, and strove hard to make the impression—and may have succeeded, to some extent—that there was informality in that journal. There is none whatever, not a particle of it, and he failed so clearly to make it out, that he dropped it suddenly. There was no real trial here, and there is everything in the journal that ought to be recorded in its pages. Let us look at it fairly. On the calling of the name of Mr. Harding at the conference in 1844, his presiding elder stated that by marriage he had become connected with slavery. Mr. Harding assented to the statement made by the presiding elder; whereupon the case was referred to a committee. They reported that the appellant be required to manumit his slaves at specified ages, and give a pledge to the conference to that effect. He refused to abide by their decision, or to give the pledge required. He was "laboured" with, (as our friends the Quakers say,) during the whole conference. Finally a committee was appointed to induce him to accede to the requisition of his brethren, and they reported that after all he had refused to comply.

Mr. Harding. Was that committee a committee to labour? They were appointed to inquire whether there was any legal difficulty in the case.

Mr. Slicer. The case is as the representative states it.

Mr. Collins. The great matter is this—Mr. Harding refused to abide by the decision of the conference. He would not move a step on the issue. The question then became, whether the Baltimore Conference was to bow to Harding, or he to the conference—whether we were to give up the ground always occupied by us on this delicate subject, or whether he should yield to us—whether he should be permitted to beard the conference, or we should bring him up to the mark, and make the rule bear upon him. When we found that all attempts at reasoning with him were disregarded, and that all the means that brotherly affection could suggest and employ were ineffectual, we suspended him, as the only resource we had in the premises. All this is stated in the journal; clearly, fully, fairly, distinctly stated. What else do you want? What more was necessary? There were no witnesses examined on the occasion, for we wanted none. Brother Harding admitted the fact, which indeed was notorious. He admitted it by his non-denial of it before the committee, and by his response and pleadings in the premises, and all that we had to do was to bring him to the bar of the conference to answer for that which he acknowledged when the presiding elder made the statement of the fact. There was not a question raised for a moment as to whether he was innocent or guilty of what the presiding elder had charged him with. He *pleaded guilty to it*. There were no witnesses, and therefore the journal states all that it could state; the "questions" were never asked, the "answers to them" never received, and therefore no "entry" or record made of them on the journal.

The prosecution next relied upon the testimony of brother Gere, whose recollections of the case were different from those of any other member of his delegation. If that brother were to state undeniably, positively, and distinctly, that he remembered the pledge in the words he states, then of course the negative testimony could not be sustained; for I am not of the opinion of the Irishman, who complained of being found guilty of the charge of theft, on the testimony of one witness, on the ground that he could bring a hundred persons who could testify that they never had seen him steal. If, therefore, brother Gere does give positive and distinct testimony to the fact he states, I admit at once its weight and authority, and I now call upon him to answer me a question—

"Are your impressions distinct and positive that Harding said, that he and his wife would consent that these persons should go to a free state?"

Dr Smith. That is not the subject; but that brother Harding pledged himself, for his wife and for himself, that he would send them to Africa if they wished, or that they might go to a free state.

Mr. Collins. Very well, I put it in that form.

Mr. Gere. I will state, as nearly as I can, what I said yesterday morning. I did not say that my recollection was *distinct*, but that the *impression* on my mind was as distinct and clear as if it had been told me yesterday morning. But I said that I might be mistaken, and I was aroused to this from what brother Griffith said, otherwise I had no idea that any one would have doubted it. Brother Morgan referred to the case of brother Hansberger, and said that he had pledged himself as I had said brother Harding had done. I think that he had pledged himself as I have been trying to conform to my brethren, but I may have identified them. I mains, though I may have confounded the two cases.

Mr. Collins. I will show you now, in confirmation of brother Morgan's account, that brother Gere must be mistaken. If brother Harding had ever given the pledge which he says he did—pledging himself and his wife—such was the disposition of the Baltimore Conference, that there would have been no such action as that which brings this business here. I know that he never did. But let that pass.

Mr. Harding. I did pledge myself as brother Gere says.

Mr. Collins. Why, Mr. President, it is all we asked for. How could the case have got here if he had pledged himself to do the very thing we asked him to do. We would have given him the whole year. It is all I asked.

Mr. Harding. You never did ask it, sir. It never was asked.

Mr. Collins. Why, sir, we should then have acted very strangely, for that is all we asked in the resolution. Hear it.

"Resolved, That brother Harding be required to execute, and cause to be recorded, a deed securing the manumission of the slaves hereinafter mentioned, &c., and that brother Harding be required to give to this conference a pledge that the said manumission shall be effected during the ensuing conference year."

I shall proceed now to reply to the material parts of the argument for the prosecution in this matter.

First. That the laws of Maryland do not admit of manumission. Now, sir, this is not according to the fact in the case. The opinion of Judge Key has been read to the effect that slaves cannot be manumitted in Maryland; but the first law they read directly contradicts the opinion. The law of 1831 specifies the course that shall be taken with regard to manumitted slaves. It provides three modes of disposing of them. First. They may go to Africa; or second, to the non-slaveholding states; and thirdly, if they fail to do so, the sheriff is required, not to take them up beyond the bounds of the state. The slave once free in Maryland is for ever free. The question does not lie on that ground. By the laws of Virginia, if a manumitted slave remains one year in the state after his manumission he can be re-enslaved; but in Maryland, when once free, he can never be re-enslaved; referred to by the prosecution, and it contradicts Judge Key, and is directly against the ground taken. The law of 1832 simply concurs in this provision of the former law, and increases the fine upon the sheriff, if he refuses or fails to comply with the requisitions of the statute. But all its enactments clearly and distinctly recognize the manumission. The law of 1843 is a strange and singular law. Its fundamental feature is against the law of God, for that makes man the head of his wife, and this law takes man from the position assigned to him by the Supreme Being. And I am satisfied that this law will work such evil, that as a matter of necessity it will have to be repealed. I hope, therefore, that you will not judge us by this law. We cannot answer for the tergiversation of the laws of Maryland, and cannot conform to all their changes. As they have gone so far as to pass a law deposing man from his rightful place in the domestic economy—a place assigned to him from the beginning of time by positive divine injunction—they may pass a law requiring him to obey his wife. What may have been the intention of the legislature in passing this law I know not. They may have intended, in a sinister way, to nail slavery faster than ever, and to rivet its chains more firmly. They had attempted to pass a law which outraged public sentiment on this subject. It raised the indignation of the people to such a pitch, that they were compelled to retract it, after getting it into the senate. Foiled in that, they may have intended to do that by stealth

which they could not accomplish openly, and binding the fetters still more strongly, render slavery more permanent, and manumission more difficult. But the eyes of the people of Maryland will be opened to the iniquity and oppression of this law also, and the legislature will be driven to repeal it. Or the intention may have been benevolent, as the law heretofore provided that if a man married a wife with slaves, they became his property by such marriage, and could be seized by his creditors; hence this is entitled a law to regulate conjugal rights as they regard property. I say it may be benevolent in its design, and be intended to secure to the female protection, if so unfortunate as to be married to one whose extravagance or crime may reduce him to insolvency, and she be turned out to penury and want.

Nothing at all is said in this law about manumission. It repeals no law. There is no repealing clause in it, and it might be safely and well argued whether such a law were worth one cent. It does not destroy the power to manumit. In one of its sections it provides, that if the husband and wife unite, the slaves can be disposed of. Its only operation in this particular is to render manumission more difficult, by requiring the co-operation of the wife. Nor does it increase the difficulty much, if any. No pious and intelligent woman, (such as Mrs. Harding doubtless is,) who has a husband in whose judgment and discretion she confides, will jeopard his standing—especially if he be a Christian minister—for the consideration of a few slaves.

A member called Mr. C. to order, on the ground of making remarks prejudicial to the character of the ladies.

Dr. Smith hoped the speaker would not be interrupted, but allowed to go on without restraint, and say whatever he thought important to his case. Besides, he (Dr. S.) had the right of reply.

Mr. Collins. It is a fair argument. I do not impeach the ladies at all. I deny the allegation that I made any remark that could be construed into any such meaning. I say that the ladies love their husbands so tenderly, and with such affectionate devotion to their interests and happiness, that if the husband wished it, they would yield such a point at once, and not jeopardize his standing for the sake of a few negroes. What I meant was, that the effort had not been made;—that if half the pains were taken in order to obtain her consent, if such were necessary, to the manumission of these negroes, that were used in wooing the lady, the application would have been successful. I, therefore, always suspect the man to be a slaveholder at heart who rests his defence on such a plea. When God arrested man in Paradise, and questioned him concerning his transgression, he said—The woman had deceived him. I always thought that a dastardly act on the part of Adam. We are very easily tempted to do what we want to do, and then rest the blame on others; and my sex has kept up the dastardly conduct to the present time. We lay our wrongs and evils upon our wives, when they cannot be heard in self-vindication.

Sir, I would not set up such a defence as this. I would scorn to do it; and I know full well, I am perfectly convinced in my judgment, that if the appellant wanted to manumit these slaves, his wife would not stand in the way one moment. He need not to have brought that plea here. The difficulty is with Mr. Harding himself, who is at heart a slaveholder, and this plea is only put in for effect. In my judgment, if he had desired it, his wife would have consented to their manumission. After all that has been said about the laws of the state of Maryland making it difficult to manumit slaves, it has been repeatedly done. Mr. Cornelius Howard, one of the most respectable citizens of that state, and brother of Colonel Howard, who led so gallantly the Maryland line at the battle of the Cowpens, and whose name stands out in proud distinction before his country, a citizen who understood law as well as any man, left his slaves free by will, and that deed is on record in the proper county court of Maryland. And how did he do it? Why, because he wanted to do it, and had, therefore, the power. The will is the great matter. The wish is "father to the thought." This man had slaves; he liberated every one of them, and had the deed of manumission recorded. And this during the last year, at the close of 1843; and this law, on which the prosecution lays so much stress as prohibiting such manumission, was passed in February, 1843. Brother Blake, one of the cases before the annual conference, against whom action was taken on precisely similar grounds as in this case, came up last conference and told us he had manumitted his boy, and had the deed recorded in Baltimore county court; and he did it last year. Now, with these facts on record, how shall it be plead here—how can it—that there is no power to manumit? There is such power. The facts that have

transpired are an incontestible proof that the thing can be done; so that, as far as the law of Maryland is concerned, there is nothing that renders it impossible. The Baltimore Conference, then, in view of the law, acted rightly toward Mr. Harding. They did right; he could have manumitted these slaves, and they suspended him because he would not.

The second point urged by the prosecution is, that if the doctrine respecting the laws of Maryland be doubtful, and if it be plead that Harding has the right of property in the slaves, yet the rule of Discipline is in his favour. He could not do it legally. Why not? The prosecution give me no answer to that question. So far as the Discipline of the Church is concerned, on this point we will take our stand. I say Mr. Harding did violate the Discipline. The rule does positively bear upon him, and the Baltimore Conference deserve thanks instead of the sneers that have been directed against them, that they have had the firmness, in the face of a slaveholding community, to enforce the Discipline. If we have not got the rule of Discipline on our side, we have a hard case to make out. But that we have it I will satisfy you. I wish the mind and the intelligence of the conference to be directed to this point, that the Discipline of the M. E. Church contemplates the relation of its members with slavery in a threefold point of view. First. As it regards private members. Secondly. As it respects local preachers. And thirdly. As it concerns travelling preachers. It is essential to maintain this distinction in coming to an opinion on this case.

First. As to private members. The only rule for this class is found in the General Rules, and only prohibits the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them. A man, by this rule, may inherit slaves, or they may come to him by natural increase, and he may will them to his posterity, and there is nothing in this Discipline that can take hold of him, this being the only law that reaches private members. It is sufficiently latitudinarian.

Second. Official members. The rule on this point takes a stronger tie, and is different in that respect to the rule affecting private members:—

“We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.”

Official members are required to emancipate. The private member is not. The official member must manumit, but still the rule comes down with comparatively less strictness, applying only in such states as will permit the slave to “enjoy his freedom.”

Third. Travelling preachers. Here the Discipline is still more stringent:—

“When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.”

Here nothing is said about the liberated slave being permitted to enjoy freedom. The simple act of manumission is treated of, and made compulsory on the travelling preacher. “If practicable,” he is to manumit. There is no other condition; the exception is narrowed down, and then the law is binding, and compels him to manumit. And it is very right and proper, in the nature of the case, that the Discipline on this subject should be more strict upon the travelling preacher than upon the local preacher, for the same reason that it is drawn more tightly in the case of the local preacher than the private member. There is wisdom, great wisdom in this regulation. Our private members are actual residents and citizens of given states. Necessity rules them, and therefore it might not do to make the law so tight in their case as in others. Our local ministers are residents of states; but in the proper sense of the term, our travelling preachers are citizens of the world;—not of Virginia, or Maryland, or South Carolina; for the bishop has power to take up a brother from South Carolina, and send him into Massachusetts. And this is especially the case in the territory embraced by the Baltimore Conference, which includes part of Pennsylvania. And because we are birds of passage, and can be removed at pleasure, by the authorities of the Church, out of the way of the local difficulties in the way of manumission, the law is, very properly, made more binding upon us. And remember, we have not brought a local preacher here, but a travelling preacher, and we try him under the rule that applies to travelling preachers.

The next point that the prosecution urges is, that their construction of the Disci-

pline was confirmed by a resolution of the General Conference, in 1840. I deny it altogether in its application to a travelling preacher; and I could not help remarking, that though my friend brought forward the rule applying to travelling preachers, yet, after reading, he very quietly dismissed it, and kept the rule applying to a local preacher constantly before our eyes. I am not sure, sir, that he did not thereby mislead us a little. That I do not misstate him at all is plain, for he made a reference to the action of the last General Conference on a memorial from Westmoreland, respecting the ordination of some local preachers. What have we to do with that? Has it anything to do in the premises? We have now to do with the Discipline that operates upon travelling preachers, and with that alone. The Baltimore Conference could not ordain those brethren, and they came up here to induce the General Conference to compel us to do it. There the action was upon the case of local preachers, and my friend brings up a stray resolution on their case! But let him show me where it says a word about travelling preachers. Their memorial was on their own behalf, as local preachers; and if they said one word about travelling preachers, they exceeded their powers altogether.

The action of the General Conference on that application has no bearing whatever on the present case, unless they had said that the same rule was binding upon travelling preachers also, which they were careful not to do, so that the prosecution has altogether failed in making out their construction of the Discipline. He gave us, to be sure, a very strange definition of what was meant by legal emancipation. It deserved the credit of originality; it was this, that a slave must be permitted to enjoy his freedom. Now, legal emancipation simply means, emancipation according to law—the law of the state—whether the man shall be allowed to remain in that state or not. And you cannot show me any action of the General Conference by which a travelling preacher cannot effect a legal emancipation. How would this apply in Mr. Harding's case? Why, according to the law of Maryland, he must emancipate with the consent of his wife. Then he does it legally. The Discipline, sir, is against Mr. Harding, or it never was against any man in the world. It meets him right in the face, and he cannot get round it. The Baltimore Conference did right in suspending him; and though that conference has been held up here to contempt and scorn, we are not ashamed of ourselves; for we have shown, with regard to the whole matter, that we have lain our interests upon the altar of principle and old Methodism, and from our present position we do not mean to be driven by Mr. Harding, or any other man.

The prosecutor has been pleased to refer to the conscience of the appellant in this matter. He had better let that alone for the present. This conscience is a strange affair. Where was his client's conscience when he entered into this business? Where his respect for the Discipline, to which he had solemnly vowed to submit himself? or for the oft-repeated wishes of the Baltimore Conference? He knew well that the step he was taking would meet with the disapprobation of almost every member on the floor of that conference; and yet he had no smittings of conscience then! I have heard of a highwayman in Italy, who could rob a man and cut his throat without any compunction; but he happened to eat meat one day in Lent, and his conscience smote him tremendously. O yes; this conscience is at times a very facile thing! A man's interest will stretch his conscience tremendously. I won't press this point any further.

The prosecutor rejoiced as one who had found great spoil; but really, I must dash his joy. I am for the Baltimore Conference against the whole world; and therefore, though my friend was very much pleased with what he supposed he had found, I must take some of his pleasure from him. He referred with an air of great triumph, and called the attention of eastern and northern men to some few words found in the report of this case—"the old ones having passed the age," &c., were to be retained; that is the clause my friend chuckled over so. He thought he had caught us tripping, and appealed to his eastern brethren to see if we carried water on both shoulders. But, sir, we are straight; we stand erect and upright, unhurt and unharmed; and here let me say, that we are one kind of men—north, south, east and west, and middle states—all stand on the same broad basis. He forgot to tell this General Conference that those very words were afterward stricken out. They never passed the Baltimore Conference. But suppose they had not been taken out of the report. My friend knows very well that it is the case almost everywhere, that when a slave arrives at a certain age, he cannot be manumitted without security being given by his owner that he shall not come upon the parish. This is the case in Maryland. In Virginia the law is still stronger. They cannot be got rid of, because they cannot

take care of themselves. The prosecutor did not state this. If our journal had stated the case, as he represented it, we should have been perfectly justified in the eye of the law. But we struck it out because we would not commit ourselves at all on the subject.

The fourth argument employed by the prosecutor was, that the spirit of the Discipline, as well as the letter, was in favour of Mr. Harding, and against the Baltimore Conference. It is a very hard matter to define what spirit is, and he did not favour us with any definition on the subject. He simply took it for granted that the Methodist Discipline was conservative. I hold that it is opposed to slavery, and that there is nothing in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church that sanctions slavery. What we mean by conservatism is this:—A party in the south contend for slavery as proper and right, and essential even to the existence of the republic and social institutions, and that it ought never to be abolished. A party in the north says it is an evil and a sin, and ought to be abolished at once without regard to circumstances. Now between these two is conservatism. The views of the Discipline on the evil of slavery are absolute and positive. It pronounces it an evil, and a great evil. And in fact it asks the question, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the great evil of slavery?" and then specifies measures by which its purpose shall be effected. But it does not regard it as sin under all circumstances.

My friend referred very strangely and singularly to the happy interference of northern abolitionism, as destructive of colonization. I confess I do not understand him, sir. Hear him:—"Slavery is an evil, a great evil"—it was severely felt as such. And yet he hails the action of abolitionists, because, in his judgment, it has resulted in riveting the chains of slavery—this admitted evil—more durably. How is this?

Dr. Smith interrupted for explanation. He insisted that Mr. C. was in error, and wished to correct him.

Mr. Collins.—I don't stand here as a gladiator, merely to gain a victory over Dr. Smith. If I am in error, put me right.

Dr. Smith.—I stated awhile ago that I should be able to put the brother right in everything, and if the brethren will let me take my notes I will try and put him right in the premises.

Mr. Collins.—I was going on to say, sir, that I do not come here to win any laurels from Dr. Smith, even if I had the power to do it. I came here in defence of the Baltimore Conference. If I have committed an error, it is unintentional; but I am satisfied I have committed no fundamental error this morning. All I want is to meet the question on Discipline, as set forth in the able argument of my friend, and all the desire I have on the subject is to put the matter in its right light, and then I am sure this appeal will be dismissed. I would just remark, in conclusion, here, that we were not ignorant of the laws of Maryland. The note of Mr. Merrick, which was read here yesterday, was before us, but as a conference we were acting on simple order. It was referred to a committee, and is therefore to be considered as having had our action upon it.

We come now, in the next place, to state the grounds on which we rest the defence of the Baltimore Conference in this matter.

First. Because the Discipline of our Church has been violated by Mr. Harding. We hold that he violated the Discipline in refusing to manumit his slaves, in a case where he could do it, and would not. This is one ground. I need here but refer to my former remarks to show that the law will admit of manumission. Such was the course pursued, that he seemed to court martyrdom, and in a rude manner denounced that venerable body as ultra abolitionists. I would not have brought in this irrelative matter had not such been brought in yesterday.

Secondly. Because Mr. Harding entered into this difficulty voluntarily. It was his own act, under circumstances of great and high aggravation. There are some cases in which *necessity* can be fairly plead, where the parties are residents in slaveholding states—in such instances the parties may claim something in mitigation. But for a man who was once free from slavery, and knowing all the consequences that would result from such action, *voluntarily* to involve himself in it, makes it a very different case. I hope the conference will bear this distinctly in mind. He was no slaveholder when the Baltimore Conference received him on trial. They ordained him a deacon and elder; and well he knew that he could never have gone into orders had he been a slaveholder. And I hold it to be the highest breach of trust, for a minister of Jesus Christ, after being put in possession of all ministerial power, to forfeit his solemn oath of allegiance, and do an act which he well knows will be an insult to his brethren, and a contravention of the Discipline he has vowed

to preserve. I say, sir, I hold it to be a high offence and breach of trust for a minister of Jesus Christ thus to act. Where was the compulsion? Why did he, comparatively a young man, thus violate the pledge solemnly given to his fathers in the Gospel? Why run counter to the will of the whole conference, and throw the apple of discord into that body, and seek to foment disunion among its members? There was no reason—no necessity for it. He might have been removed the next year to another station. It was, I repeat, a breach of trust of no ordinary character thus to fly in the face of the Church and his brethren. And this he did voluntarily and of his own accord. Sir, I hold that no Methodist preacher has a right to do just as he pleases. Even in the choice of a wife he is under obligations to make a prudent choice, and to take counsel of his aged brethren. No, sir, not even in the delicate matter of marriage has a Methodist preacher a right to do as he pleases. The character and standing of the conference are in some measure in his keeping, and he cannot at will shake off the obligation, and trifle with the trust that he himself has solicited, and which has been placed in his charge in perfect confidence and good faith.

Thirdly. Because he did it with his eyes open. He can plead no ignorance here. He knew the law of the state of Maryland, which he has pleaded in his defence here. And he also knew, what ought to have been with him of pre-eminent importance, the law of the Baltimore Conference. All this he knew, and that I may not appear to overstate my points, I beg permission to have read from our journal a case in point. It was that of brother Hansberger. [Action of the Baltimore Conference in that case read, as recorded in the journals, by the secretary. It was a similar case, in which the conference had made a like requisition, and the member had submitted.]

Mr. Collins continued. The appellant had this case before his eyes when he entered upon the engagement and married these slaves. Such resolutions, passed by the Baltimore Conference, ought to have deterred him from taking this step. One of them goes to say, that if any brother do thus act in disregard of the wishes of the conference in this matter, he shall be deemed guilty of contumacy. Yet, with this resolution before him, exposing himself to the charge of contumacy, he involved himself and the conference in this difficulty.

Fourthly. Because, by becoming a slaveholder, he rendered himself unavailable to us as a travelling preacher.

The Baltimore Conference is composed of slaveholding and non-slaveholding territory, in nearly equal proportions. As a slaveholder, in the non-slaveholding portions of the conference, they would not hear him preach. He would have to be confined entirely to the slaveholding section. And if this course were sanctioned, there would be increased difficulty entailed upon the appointing power of the Church in keeping one set of men perpetually in each section of the conference. Nor is this all. It would have a direct tendency to locality, and would thus strike at the very root of our itinerant system; and no man has a right to involve himself so as to confine, necessarily, his labors to any one portion of the work, thus virtually giving up his relation as an itinerant minister, and rendering himself unavailable. We could then have nothing to do with him, but to get rid of him as easily as we could, and pray God to fill his place with some one who will not bring this discordance among us. I beg the conference to look well to this single point connected with slavery. He would have been to us a semi-local preacher. Ought this to be sustained? Are there not tendencies enough already to locality in our system without increasing them? And ought such an obstruction as that in which Harding has involved himself to be forced upon a conference which has always repudiated it? We want no such restraints; and because we do not, we have placed this brother in the situation he occupies.

Our fifth, and last reason, is this. Because of the position the Baltimore Conference has ever occupied on the subject of slavery. And I wish to define this position, that it may be clearly and correctly understood. The Baltimore Conference never has sanctioned the connection of any of its members with slavery. It has been tried by marriage contracts, but that plan failed. It has been tried also by other means, but they also failed; and never remotely or directly, and in no sense, have they affected our integrity. The Baltimore Conference has maintained her independence at all times, and means to maintain it. And in taking this position she is fortified by the Discipline; call it conservative, or what you will. She is on the old Methodist basis, where she was first put—on the ground on which she was first planted.

We had a definition yesterday of conservatism, and I thought it the strangest I ever heard in my life. If the prosecutor be a conservative, convinced of the great evil of slavery, why, I beg of him, will he force this thing upon us when we do not want it. We have taken no new ground on this subject. We are just where we always were—standing as a breakwater to pro-slavery in the south, and the waves of abolition from the north. I know that this has been sneered at, and much sarcasm has been spent upon it, but it is nevertheless true. We have not been propelled to our present position either by the north or the south. We are just where the venerable and venerated Asbury and our fathers were. Brother Smith has been largely professing conservatism! But what sort of conservatism is it? He admits that slavery is a great evil, and yet is favourable to perpetuating it, and forcing it upon a body that always repudiated it. 'Tis a strange conservatism! We know it not. It never had an existence in the Baltimore Conference. We cannot comprehend it, and we would not, if we could. I am not for any violent measure on the subject of slavery. I firmly believe that if this matter had been left alone and untouched, such is the influence of Methodism and other means, that, ere this day, the states of Maryland and Virginia would have made considerable advance in gradual emancipation. It is by the preaching of the Gospel—the diffusion of the benevolent spirit of Christianity, that the rigors of slavery have been abated; and by the continuation of such means shall the broad expansive principles of Christian liberty be promulgated until the spirit of freedom find a shrine in every cabin, and a home in every heart. I love the negro. My first recollections—those infantile associations that perish not amid the rougher conflicts of life—are of a negro who nursed me. I was raised among them, and I know how to love them. But let such love be shown, not by violent measures for their deliverance from bondage, but by carrying, in the true spirit of Methodist itinerancy and conservatism, the Gospel to their cabins—by going to the poor African and praying for him and with him—by visiting the poor and needy among them, the widow and the fatherless, the sick and in prison! Yes, sir, that is the man for me, who will thus “show me his faith by his works.”

We had the vessel of Colonization and gradual emancipation, fair and beautiful, and in fine trim, gliding swiftly and gracefully across the limpid waters, bounding from wave to wave before the propitious breeze. Joyously and gracefully she speeds along her trackless path; and the crested wave, kissing transiently her graceful bow, falls back into the tranquil sea—all, all is fair, and bright, and prosperous! But see! the heavens are darkening—the storm is howling—the sea heaves beneath the sudden tempest, and the waves thereof roar and toss themselves—the gale has struck her! What then? Shall we desert her? No, sir; the Baltimore Conference will not do so! They will not forsake the ship because the gale has struck her, and she bends beneath the storm! They will not rush below in terror and affright, or jump overboard with phrensied despair. Sir, they know us not who think we are the men to quail in the hour of danger. We will not strike our flag. We will not combine with the enemies of the African, either in the north or south. We will work the ship, hoping and believing, that by the blessing of God, we shall come off successfully at last! Abolitionism shall never make us pro-slavery. Why, sir, we saw the cloud, to which my friend refers, in its deepening, spreading darkness—we heard the pealing thunder as it was borne up to us on the wings of the tempest wind, and beheld the lurid glare of the lightning's flash; but we were not dismayed. The gallant ship—our good old Methodism—has outridden many a perilous storm, and will many another, and despite these passing dangers we mean to voyage in the old ship “o'er life's tempestuous ocean,” and will never leave her nor forsake her, for ours is the right kind of conservatism. We acknowledge, as true conservatives, moral excellence and worth on both sides. Some of the best men and women we have known have been slaveholders, and we are well aware that some of these are slaveholders of necessity. It is a remarkable fact that the members of the Baltimore Conference, who have sustained this measure, were mostly raised in slaveholding states.

The speaker then paid a just tribute to certain members of the Baltimore Conference who had manumitted their slaves for Christianity's sake, and maintained that instead of being held up to reproach, that conference was justly entitled to the thanks of Methodism in all its connections. He then proceeded to recapitulate the points which he had endeavoured to establish. He thought he had proved that the journal of the conference was correct—that the laws of the state of Maryland

admit of manumission—that the Discipline of the Church did bear upon Mr. Harding's case—that that Discipline had been violated by him—that he was righteously liable to the consequences of that violation—that he had acted in the matter voluntarily and contumaciously, and that he had rendered himself unavailable, as a travelling preacher, to his brethren of the Baltimore Conference.

And now, having shown the reasons why the Baltimore Conference suspended Mr. Harding, he (Mr. C.) asked, Would the General Conference send him back again to them? He begged them to consider well, and with great calmness, before they did so. Did they wish to make another slaveholding conference? Admit one slaveholder, and the Baltimore Conference has no longer the independent position they could now irreproachably assume! Once break down the barrier, and they must admit others! Would they thus humble their fathers in Christ, and thus trample on old Methodism? He trusted they would not, but would assist them still to occupy the ground they had, by much sacrifice, and with much difficulty, been able to take. If they did change their ground, it was hard to say where they would stop. Their young men would by marriage become slaveholders, and the principles which the Baltimore Conference so long had held would be sacrificed entirely. The question was a momentous one, not so much between Mr. Harding and the Baltimore Conference, but between the Baltimore Conference and all future candidates for the ministry in their conference. He was aware that appeals would be made to their sympathies. In this the prosecution would have the advantage. But they must also remember that the appellant by his conduct had proved that he did not place much value upon his relation to his fathers and brethren, and therefore on that score he could claim really nothing.

He did not wish to wound the feelings of the southern brethren. Among them were many venerable for their talents, and piety, and usefulness in the Church of God; but while he would not be the willing instrument of wounding their feelings, he was compelled to say what he had said, that he might put the act of the conference he represented in its right and proper view before them. He prayed the blessing of God upon his southern as well as northern brethren, and trusted they should live and labour on in love and friendship, and that time would mellow down all asperities on the painful subject which was agitating the connection, so that they might dwell together as one family on earth, and then each, from north and south, and east and west, should enter triumphantly into the heaven they were seeking, where all minor distinctions would be swallowed up and lost in the beatific contemplation of Him who had washed them from sin in his own blood, and made them kings and priests unto God for ever.

Mr. President,—The ground of the Baltimore Conference is unquestionably the true one. She is truly conservative. She never has proclaimed—never will—anywhere, or at any time, or under any circumstances, that “slavery is a sin under all circumstances;”—while, at the same time, she wishes to preserve the members of her body disconnected with slavery, that the influence of their example may tell silently and surely against its perpetuation. The head and front of our offending—that for which we are arraigned at the bar of this General Conference—is simply this: We wish to keep slavery from our travelling ministry. This is no new thing with us. The effort made now is to effect a change in the position of the Baltimore Annual Conference by making it a slaveholding body. This, I trust, will not be done. We cannot sacrifice our ground to accommodate Mr. Harding, or any other man who may choose to become a slaveholder. The issue of the case before us involves momentous consequences, affecting the whole Church—and in full confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the General Conference we submit it to their decision.

The President said that any of the Baltimore Conference delegation were now at liberty to speak on the subject, and

Mr. Slicer rose to address the conference. He said he had been in doubt whether any other of the delegation besides the brother who had been specially intrusted with the case, ought to address them on this subject. He would, however, occupy their attention briefly. The memorial of certain local preachers had been frequently referred to. The brethren memorialized the several conferences either to right them, or set them off. But the people were not willing to be set off, and when the General Conference sat in Philadelphia in 1832, the people south of the Rappahannock River memorialized the conference not to let the Virginia people have them. And if the people there desired the ministrations of the preachers of the Baltimore Conference, and not of the Virginia Conference, was

it not likely that the friends north of that river would have still stronger sentiments on the subject? Something had been said about "loaves and fishes." Now the people referred to were a clever, intelligent people, but their territory was by no means the most desirable portion under the care of the Baltimore Conference.

The reverend gentleman then gave a geographical description of the country, and said that the Baltimore Conference was in nowise disposed to part with them, unless they (the people) wished it. They did not intend that any number of local preachers should separate them, but when a majority of the people wished it, it should be done. The people there were an admirable people, and a conservative people, too, having been supplied with anti-slavery preachers—so true was it that the people received their complexion from the ministry. At Whitemarsh, where the Roman Catholic priests own slaves almost without number, and sell them *ad libitum*, and pay the money into the "Lord's treasury," in that whole country slavery exists under the worst forms. The rev. gentleman gave a further analysis of the country and the state of feeling in the various districts, illustrating his position, that the character of the people depended on the character of the ministry, and showed that the progress of emancipation had been from north to south.

He then proceeded to notice the position of the Baltimore Conference to the appellant before them. He (the appellant) was well aware that his becoming a slaveholder would be a disqualification for his usefulness among the people. He (Mr. Slicer) had known Mr. Harding from his youth up, had preached in his father's house, and was willing to make any sacrifice but of principle to meet his case, and to bring him into compliance with the wishes of the conference. He must say, however, that all the labour and anxiety of a committee appointed for that purpose was met by the appellant, not only with no sympathy, but with utter contempt and disregard. If, however, he thought it more important to maintain his position than yield to the wishes of his brethren, the election was with him. The conference could do without him quite as well as he could do without the conference. If he were sent back twenty times, the Baltimore Conference would not change its ground; and he (Mr. S.) looked confidently, as he prayed earnestly, for the day when this dark spot should be wiped away from this free country.

Mr. Griffith had no intention to make a speech on the subject, but he wished to call the attention of the conference to a few facts connected with the matter under their notice. It had been said that the Baltimore Conference occupied a territory nearly equally divided between slaveholding and non-slaveholding states, and embracing part of Virginia; yet the Baltimore Conference had always contrived to avoid any agitation of the question among the people of Virginia, and had never violated any of the laws of that state; and from this he thought a lesson might be learned. Yesterday, the brother, in advocating the cause of the appellant, had said "only slavery where we must," as if he intended to make the impression that this young man was of necessity connected with slavery—tied hand and foot. Now this was far from being the fact—there was not a word of truth in it. He could disentangle himself in an hour if he liked, the laws of Maryland notwithstanding. In point of fact, the law against manumission was inoperative. It would be indeed strange if a freeman had not the right to make that disposal of his property which he might choose to make. Maryland never had said that a slave might be taken up and sold—she never had declared that slaves were property, and then, in the same breath, that men should not do what they thought fit with their own property, and that she assumed the right to do that which she forbade the owner doing. No, sir, they know that a man has a right to set his slaves free—they know the illegality and imperfection of any act to the contrary—and yet they try to control it, and ward off the consequences by this kind of — he hardly knew how to designate such kind of legislation.

One word further. That young brother was perfectly at liberty to emancipate his slaves at any time he liked. No man in the state of Maryland doubted his right. Slaves were set free all over the state. And if the Virginia Conference had been as careful to preserve the integrity of her own original position as the Baltimore Conference, she would now have been as free from the great evil as the Baltimore Conference was. And why not? The Baltimore Conference keeps territory side by side with the Virginia Conference. Nothing but the Rappahannock River divides them. And the Baltimore Conference had occupied this territory with preachers free from slavery, and you will, on examining the statistics, find that we have had, at least, equal success with our Virginia brethren.

At the conclusion of Mr. Griffith's remarks, the President inquired whether the

delegation of the Baltimore Conference had concluded, when Dr. Smith said he hoped not, for they had not yet attempted to show that the appellant was the owner of a single slave.

Mr. Collins. This is not the place. He has already acknowledged that he was so involved in slaveholding that he could not get rid of it.

Mr. Harding. I do not admit it—I deny it.

Mr. Collins. What did the presiding elder and the record on the journal say? Why, that Mr Harding has "come into the possession of several slaves."

There were a variety of ways in which a man could become connected with slavery. One of which was by a marriage contract, of all other courses the most dishonourable and hateful. This shifting it upon the woman was adding meanness to injury, and was nothing but a mere special plea—a disingenuous and disreputable quibble. He (the appellant) gets the benefit, and has the control of the property, and is therefore in fact a slaveholder. Let them not hang their defence on such a mere technicality.

Mr. Sargent. The whole action proceeded on the admitted fact, that he was a slaveholder; and the fact was never denied, and this plea is entirely an after thought.

Mr. Collins said that an honourable man would hate to get off by any such quibble. The man never denied that he was a slaveholder. And this was also in direct opposition to the plea set up yesterday, namely, that he offered to send these slaves to Liberia or any free state. If he had no slaves, either jointly or otherwise, why make that plea, and try to get off by saying that he had consented to remove them? And why pledge his consent if he had no ownership? Let them meet the case honestly and fairly. They were not arguing the matter before a set of quibbling lawyers. This was a mere *ruse*. But it would not do. The very law they had appealed to was against them. By section 2, it made him joint owner with his wife to all intents and purposes, and the appellant knew it. Very sorry was he (Mr. C.) that the prosecutor should think it necessary to resort to such a quibble.

Some further conversation arose respecting the time at which the rejoinder should be heard, as the anniversary of the Bible Society was to be held on the following day; but the conference adjourned without coming to any conclusion.

FRIDAY, MAY 10.

By consent of the appellant's advocate, Mr. Collins again took the floor. He acknowledged the courtesy and Christian temper manifested by Dr. Smith. He wished to touch one or two points before he was ruled out by the discipline regulating the conference. A rumour prevailed, he had learned, among the members of the conference, that there was at present three or four slaveholders in the Baltimore Conference. He (Mr. C.) denied, distinctly and fully, that such was the case—they had not, nor would they have, a slaveholder among them. He then glanced at the various cases that had come before them, as an annual conference, and showed that in every case they had treated them exactly as they had dealt with Mr. Harding.

Messrs. Davis, Griffith, and Slicer emphatically denied the truth of such a rumour, and endorsed all Mr. C. had said upon the subject.

Mr. M'Mahan rose to order. He objected to this answering all the gossip they might hear out of door. If they were all to do so, he knew not where it might stop.

Bishop Waugh thought, as it was connected in some degree with the appeal before the conference, in which the conference had allowed some latitude to both sides, it was not necessary to interrupt the speaker. There was hardly any departure yet that could call for interference.

Mr. Collins resumed. He wished also to correct another wrong impression. It was partially believed that the Baltimore Conference in suspending Mr. Harding had acted in ignorance of the law of 1843. He begged to correct this misconception. They had before them the opinion of Justice Merrick with regard to this very law. But he would say boldly, that if the law had been tenfold what it is, if it had actually, outright and downright, without any possibility of avoiding it, taken these slaves from Harding's control, the conference would still have acted just as they did; because they did not intend to change their ground, and could not pretend to alter their views with every shifting of the legislature. Besides, the legislature did not compel Mr. Harding to become a slaveholder.

Since the discussion, he had spoken with several preachers who were over here from the Baltimore Conference, and they all agreed that Mr. Harding never gave the pledge he said he did; so he (Mr. C.) thought that point was disposed of. As to the question of ownership, it was plainly laid down in the laws of the state, that the husband had joint ownership. The law was designed simply to give the wife such control over her property that it should not be taken from her for any debts or contracts of her husband, and if the lady is a slaveholder, the husband is one too. The gentleman went through the different sections of the law with great ability, dissecting and analyzing them with much skill and minuteness, and then touched upon the Discipline of the Church, to show that it was more positive in requiring a travelling preacher to manumit his slaves than it was with local preachers and other officers of the Church. He then proceeded to show that public opinion at Baltimore, and throughout most of the territory under the charge of that conference, was in their favour; and that there was no *practical* difficulty in the way of manumitting slaves in Maryland, for it was constantly done, and four-fifths of the coloured people in Baltimore were free. And now, he inquired, were the Baltimore Conference to be made to lick the dust at the feet of the appellant, or were they to be supported in their action, as they ought to be? Would the General Conference say to the Baltimore Conference, after all her prayers, and efforts, and sacrifices, and reproach, that she was to take into her bosom a slaveholding minister? If so, the consequences would be calamitous in the extreme. The issue was fairly before them, and whatever were the consequences it must be fairly met.

He then made a most earnest and affectionate appeal to his southern brethren, calling upon them by their avowal of the evil of slavery not to force the "evil" upon a conference that had hitherto kept clear of it; and addressing the other two sections of the Church, he implored them, by their love of order, and their regard for discipline, to sustain the Baltimore Conference in this appeal.

Dr. Smith then rose to reply. He said, Sir, I wish most particularly to disclaim the obligations the speakers have felt themselves free to express for the indulgence extended them. It was no tax to my feelings to entertain the request to make an explanation this morning, and no risk to my cause to grant it. Although the "explanation" amounted to a second speech on the merits of the case, and occupied some two hours or more, yet I may safely commit the whole of it to our faithful reporter. If I understand myself, few things would have afforded me more pleasure than for the counsel, Mr. Collins, both on his own account and the reputation of his conference, to have recovered his position before this body and the whole Church. No one, I am sure, will doubt his ability. He has exhausted his resources both of argument and eloquence. He has been indulged, both by myself and the conference, in every advantage he asked. Still, sir, I feel satisfied, from the manifest weakness of his positions, that if he will suffer the reporter to do him justice, he will find reason to be ashamed of his cause. From various indications on this floor, there may be good reason to fear, that the cause of the appellant finds but little sympathy with many. The American Methodist Church, however, may give a different verdict. The counsel may find as much cause ultimately to cower under this decision as he now finds to triumph under the strange sympathy which his offensive doctrines have met with in this body. Before I enter upon the true issues before the conference, I must notice several points which the counsel and those who have come to his aid have dwelt upon as important to their cause. I shall treat them as preliminary to this discussion.

1. The speaker, brother Collins, has complimented me—in very flattering terms to be sure—on what he considers my conversion from pro-slavery to anti-slavery principles. Sir, this was intended for effect. The impression may be made that I did not give my actual opinions on the subject of slavery. This is a short way of avoiding my argument. Why did not the speaker invalidate my position, by showing that slavery in its circumstances is necessarily sinful, and, therefore, the course of the Baltimore Annual Conference should be sustained? Why, sir? Because there was a much sounder discretion in declining to meet my arguments, and cover his retreat by the intimation that I did not myself believe the doctrines on which the vindication of Mr. Harding rests. But, sir, I cannot yield this advantage. My arguments, showing that slavery is not necessarily sinful, are unanswered—indeed untouched. And until this be done, the action of the Baltimore Conference is wholly indefensible. If *moral turpitude, more or less*, does not necessarily attach to slavery, the decision of this court of ministers, depriving a member of their body of holy orders, simply because of his union by marriage with a lady who held pro-

perty in slaves, is an outrage upon the feelings of the appellant, an indignity to a very large portion of the Church, and a reflection on the judgment of the Baltimore Conference. Sir, I should appreciate much more highly the position of the speaker had he met my argument fairly. But I am converted, it is said! When? Where? or at what altar? I honestly confess I know nothing about it. It is a change I never felt. I never, on any former occasion, attempted an extended expression of opinion before this body on the subject of slavery. On the subject of abolition I remember to have made a remark on the floor of the General Conference of 1832. I will quote it here. "Abolition is now in its egg state—now you can put your foot upon it, and crush it; but if, instead of this, you breathe upon it the warm breath of your approbation, it shall hatch a scorpion that shall sting you to the heart." And now, sir, I ask whether my prediction is in a way to be verified or not? Twelve years only have passed away, and a purely abolition movement on the part of the Baltimore Annual Conference finds favour in this body. Yes, sir, such are the indications that it may be well if we be not on the eve of division. Your decision in this case may be the knell of our long-cherished union.

I affirmed in my opening speech, that the south was not pro-slavery but anti-slavery. The Georgia and South Carolina Conference delegations, with every other member from the south on this floor, united in a most hearty response to the appeal I made to them on this point. This, too, is seized upon, and these conferences are also congratulated upon their conversion. This is based chiefly I suppose upon the resolutions adopted by these conferences in 1831, declaring that slavery "is not a moral evil." But, sir, this argues no change. They still adhere to their position in the sense—and a good one, too—in which they used the phrase "moral evil." The popular sense of their resolutions, as understood everywhere, was simply this, *that slavery was not necessarily sinful*. They still believe so. Sir, no other meaning was ever attached to "moral evil," as a popular expression, until the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal thought proper to call up a meaning unknown to the popular mind. To raise a platform on which the abolitionists of the north might stand, without identifying themselves with O. Scott, and his extreme measures of reforming the government of the Church, he called up the distinction between "moral evil" and sin. Thus he rallied the scattered forces of the north, dubbing Scott, &c., as "radico-abolitionists," and the Simon Pures as "abolitionists!" merely. How far this consolidation of northern forces was done with a view to consequences which now threaten the Church with division, I cannot say.

No, sir, we are not converted. We stand on the same ground we have occupied from the foundation of the Church—the grand conservative ground laid by our fathers in the book of Discipline. Slavery, as it exists among us, is "a great evil," and I will add, to none so great an "evil" as to the master. "It is not, however, necessarily a sin." I will add, it is only a sin to those individuals who abuse the institution. No, sir, we have not changed our ground. We have no hecatomb of slaughtered principles to offer upon the altar of abolition devotions. And if they would bind our principles, we would point them to the prophetic "he-goat" in Daniel's vision, as more synbolical of the desolating effect of their fanatical measures, and say to them, Take him for the sacrifice!

2. I made a strong point of the informality of the Baltimore Conference journal, claiming on this ground that the case be at least returned for a new trial. The jealous concern of the counsel for the reputation of his conference is peculiarly awaked at the indignity of such an imputation. Well, let us see. The Discipline of our Church requires that in the trial of a minister, "regular minutes of the trial shall be kept, including all the questions proposed to the witnesses, with their answers." According to the statement of the counsel there was no witness in this case but Harding himself. Now, sir, according to the discussion the other day, and the argument of counsel, the merit of this case turns chiefly upon this point—did Mr. Harding pledge himself and his wife, before the conference, to send these slaves to Africa or to a free state, *if they would consent to go*? One of the delegation distinctly remembers that he did so pledge himself and his wife: the others do not remember to have heard the pledge. All, however, agree that the witness made many statements before the conference; some of these you have heard plead against him by the counsel. Why, sir—seeing he was most unjustly made to witness against himself—why, I ask, do not the journals record his testimony, that he may now have the benefit of it? Are not the journals defective in this respect? And as a proof of the bearing of this fact upon the issue, I appeal to brother Tippet, a member of the delegation, had Harding been thus understood, if it is likely he would

have been suspended. Brother Tippet, I see, is silent, sir. I understand his silence; he knows it to be so.

Mr. Tippet—from his seat—I deem it unnecessary to answer *now*, (the time for receiving testimony having passed.)

It is not important you should, sir. It might involve you in serious responsibilities. Your silence is sufficient. Now, sir, can anything be more plain than this, that these journals are defective, and that in a point most material to the issue before us? Is it not the least we can do, in justice to the appellant, to send him back for a new trial? But, sir, the journals record material facts, which show the illegality and injustice of the whole proceeding so clearly, that he is entitled to be wholly released from the suspension. This I will show in the proper place.

3. The next point on which I should make some remarks is the reply of the General Conference of 1840 to the memorial from Westmoreland, Virginia. The origin of this memorial I have explained. I read the resolution adopted by the conference. The counsel finds himself much embarrassed by this resolution; and contents himself with a flat denial that it admits of any application to the case of the appellant. He affirms that it applied exclusively to local preachers. That it originated in the case of local preachers is admitted. But the report of the committee is an elaborate and most conclusive argument in support of a principle which applies to all preachers. The argument is not as to the meaning of Discipline in relation to *local* preachers merely, as he supposes. The report concludes with a resolution, which I have before read, and from which I will quote one clause: "The ownership of slave property in states or territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the *various grades of office* known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church." "*Various grades of office.*" Can language be more explicit? On what authority, therefore, can it be pleaded that this applies to local preachers *only*? That constitutes but *one* of the grades of office. Sir, the assertion is a gross absurdity. I maintain, therefore, that the meaning of Discipline, by this decision of the General Conference of 1840, is settled in Mr. Harding's favour. Language cannot more clearly warrant a conclusion. And for this General Conference to sustain the Baltimore Conference in Harding's case, is to do it in the teeth of the Discipline as interpreted by themselves in 1840. It is to add to the afflictions of the outraged brethren of Westmoreland, who are the more grievously wronged in this, that to the present time, the Baltimore Conference have continued to deny them their rights. Surely, sir, this conference should be held to a rigid accountability for this act of injustice to the local brethren of Westmoreland, and of contumacy to the General Conference. But, instead of this, will you embolden them in a systematic course of wrong-doing, by refusing to sustain the appeal? I hope not.

In this connection I propose to notice several particulars of a kindred character, introduced by the counsel. It is affirmed that Mr. Harding's relation to slavery rendered him "unavailable" as a Methodist preacher. On this ground it is argued, that it was expedient to "*suspend him*," because the conference is authorized (and are accustomed so to do) to locate men who are unavailable. That is, sir, to throw the language into a more logical form—because the conference has an *authority*, which they are accustomed to exercise, to *locate* one who is unavailable as a travelling preacher, (*which*, be it observed, *leaves him in possession of his ministerial orders*), therefore, it was both legal and expedient to *suspend* the appellant, and thus *deprive* him of his ministerial orders! Fine logic this! But, sir, on what ground was Mr. Harding unavailable? Why, because a part of the conference appointments are within a non-slaveholding state. Well, sir, are all the members of this body considered "unavailable" whom it would not be prudent to send to any part of the work? How absurd! This conference abounds with appointments to which the appellant could be sent with the greatest propriety. The plea is a mere pretext. The counsel affirmed that "slavery had *ceased* ere this in Maryland if it had been let alone." True, sir. Why then will not the Baltimore Conference let it alone? Do they let it alone by a systematic plan of proscription? No, sir, no.

I charged the Baltimore Conference with great and manifest inconsistency in suspending Mr. Harding, because he would not manumit the slaves of his wife, when at the same time they required him to retain a part of the servants in perpetual slavery. This, I said, was an abandonment of principle; and I now add that it shows that Mr. Harding was seized as a victim, whose sacrifice was the only way

of reaching other and more influential members of the conference. The counsel triumphed greatly in the assurance he gave you, that this feature of the report of the committee in Harding's case "was not adopted by conference, but was struck out." But, sir, I cannot let the conference escape in this way. I will hold them to their responsibility by the firm grasp of documentary truth. The vote of the conference on the report of the committee in Harding's case, *did not strike out* the clause leaving him in possession of certain slaves, (specified by name,) but only struck out the clause assigning the reason for requiring him to keep them in slavery. Such is the fact, sir, according to the document, and the shame of the transaction will attach to the Baltimore Conference until they reform their ways. But the counsel is particularly liberal to us on this point, and equally fatal to his cause. He is free to tell us a part of his argument, what this reason was, namely, that the laws of the state did not admit of emancipation after a certain age. This he says to vindicate his conference from the charge I urged, of inconsistency in holding the appellant to so pious an accountability to free himself, at the peril of his membership, from slavery, and at the same time require him to hold certain of them in perpetual bondage. Really, sir, it seems that the same evil genius which unquestionably presided over the deliberations of this body of grave divines, still holds uncontrolled dominion over the mind of the counsel. For, let me remind you, in a word, of the late law of Maryland, of 1843, which I read the other day. In this it is specifically provided that the old law, to which the counsel refers, be and is hereby rescinded, and hereafter all, without respect to age, shall be eligible to emancipation on the same conditions.

4. But, sir, the counsel sought to involve me in absurdity. I argued that slavery was not necessarily a sin, and that its circumstances are such that it is right to tolerate it, although it be connected with many evils. Now, if this position involves an absurdity, the converse of it, I suppose, must be true. That is, it is wrong to tolerate slavery (being connected with so many evils) because it is sinful under all circumstances. And whatever may be the speculative opinion of members of the Baltimore Conference on this point, I can see no reasonable ground on which they can stand respected in their own eyes for the decision in Harding's case but this, *that his relation to slavery was sinful*. Observe, sir, he was not located. This would have left him in possession of orders. He was not *reproved merely*. No, sir, he was *suspended*—that is (in view of the declaration that he could not make the required pledge) expelled the ministry—deposed from orders. And for what, sir? For no heterodoxy in doctrine, nor viciousness of life—that is, for no sin. Will they say this? Unless they do, *it follows that they looked upon his relation to slavery as constituting him a sinner*. And on what other hypothesis can we account for the paternity of a series of most offensive remarks which have grated so harshly upon our ears, especially from Messrs. Collins and Griffith? If Mr. Harding's connection with slavery (just such a connection as is held by southern men generally) be not in a high degree sinful, many remarks from these brethren are without any apology that I can conceive of. Why, sir, in the select phraseology of these speakers, slavery is always "a dark subject!" The appellant is charged with having involved himself in all the difficulties that embarrass and afflict him, "by marrying the woman he did"—and why? Because she had slaves. And, sir, for this crime he is *personally* charged on this floor by word, accompanied with a most emphatic gesticulation, with having violated his plighted faith to the conference, and discarding "the godly admonitions of his brethren." Nay, he was asked where was his "conscience" when he formed this matrimonial connection? Yes, sir, so full of turpitude is the crime of marrying a lady with this property, that it must be hunted down, even at the expense of Mrs. Harding's feelings. It is affirmed, in allusion to her, that "no pious and intelligent woman" would jeopardize the standing (in the Baltimore Conference) "of a husband in whose judgment and discretion she confides, for the consideration of a few slaves." I really had thought that if the opinions of the speaker did not, that his gallantry, in view of these galleries, would save him from so far outraging the feelings of a lady. (*Mr. Collins explained, and disclaimed all intention to impugn the piety or intelligence of Mrs. Harding—he did not doubt either.*) I believe you, sir; and it was my purpose to offer, in your behalf, the best apology I could for the freedom of expression you employed in this delicate connection. Yes, sir, there is no doubt that if it was the appellant who was to suffer by this reference to his lady. If the slaves were not manumitted, we were to understand it to be wholly his fault. This is the gist of the matter. But, sir, I am not right sure, after all, that he should be

held to accountability in this way, for the disposition which his lady would make of property made hers—to be held in her own right—by a special law of the state. Indeed, I am not certain, if what I have learned of the counsel be true, but that his own success in wooing the consent of the ladies has long since satisfied him of the practical truth contained in the couplet:—

“If she will, *she will*, you may depend on’t;
If she won’t, *she won’t*, so there’s an end on’t.”

There is still another remark by which the speakers betray their affinities. More than one has invoked this body not to “drive them to take rank with a slaveholding conference!” *Take rank with a slaveholding conference!!* My dear sir, who are you, and what is your conference, that you should deprecate a footing with your brethren of other conferences? What elevation is this you have reached that you must needs *stoop* to be on a footing with Virginia, and the conferences south of you! You “take rank” with Virginia! Sir, I was not an indifferent observer of the kindred emotions which this pure abolition appeal awakened in certain quarters of this house. And however agreeable the response elicited by these remarks may be to the cherished affinities of the speakers, they may know that they aroused feelings of the deepest regret and mortification in other quarters. Sir, they cut harshly across the sensibilities of many a heart here; and must continue to jar in harsh discord amid the sweetest music of our long-cherished relations. It was not without cause, sir, that the counsel closed his remarks by asking forgiveness. True, we have much cause to complain. Yet I will venture to pledge him the forgiveness of every southern man on this floor. I will cherish the hope that stress of circumstances, in defending a hopeless cause, has betrayed him to the use of so many offensive remarks. But you (addressing Mr. C.) must allow me to remind you, and those whose views you represent, that you are no “conservatives.” You wisely choose a more expressive figure when you represent your body as the “breakwater” of the conferences. And verily the “breakwater” ye are! for in your *branch* of the common stream it seems has accumulated the drift-wood and sawyers, so to speak, which have floated upon the bosom of Methodism, from the upper and the nether sources of abolition, until the dam of error has stretched itself across your tide, and backed up your waters, until they have drowned, instead of fertilized your lands.

5. I proceed to notice the remarks of brother Slicer. As he did not design to enter into the merits of the subject I felt indifferent. I was, however, soon roused by the announcement that he would disclose a transaction disreputable to the Virginia Conference. (He replied, Not so—I said discreditable.) Well, “discreditable.” (No—I said, a transaction not so creditable to Virginia.) Well, “not so creditable to Virginia,” in the Westmoreland case. Sir, the announcement, I say, aroused me. I listened! Heard the explosion—watched the slow progress of the spent ball!—the sluggish missile fell far below its mark! He says he is not such a conservative as I am. Right glad am I of it. I may safely turn him over to our faithful reporter. He will do him justice, I have no doubt.

6. In concluding these preliminary remarks, I will notice one statement of brother Griffith. He reminds us that a large part of the territory of the Baltimore Conference is in Virginia, west of the mountains. But few slaves comparatively are in this section of the state. This he attributes to the steady opposition of his conference to slavery. This might be argued, sir, if they had found in that section of the work a large slave population which had been gradually diminishing. But the reverse of this is precisely true. They found originally but few slaves, and the number of these has increased greatly since that time. If brother Griffith had not been indebted to his imagination for this important fact, I might give him the credit of a good argument—bating always, however, his earnest deprecation of the dishonour which he supposes will attach to his being “driven to take rank” with brethren at least *his* equals!

Having disposed of these several points which appeared to me as preliminary merely, I now ask your indulgence, sir, for a short time, while I set before you the merits of this case as I find it in the journals of the Baltimore Conference.

To present it more clearly I will read the record from the journal.

“Whereas, F. A. Harding, a member of the Baltimore Annual Conference, by his late marriage with Miss Swan, of St. Mary’s county, Md., has come in possession of several slaves; viz., one named Harry, aged 52; one woman, named Maria,

aged 56; one man, named John, aged 22; a girl, aged 13, named Hannah; and a child, named Margaret, aged 2 years; and whereas the Baltimore Conference, according to its well-known usage, CANNOT, and WILL NOT, tolerate slavery in any of its members; therefore,

"Resolved, That brother F. A. Harding is hereby required to execute, and cause to be recorded, a deed securing the manumission of the slaves hereinafter mentioned: the man named John, at the age of 28 years; the two female children, at the age of 23; the issue of the females, if any, to be free at the same time with their mothers. And that brother Harding be further required to give to this conference, during its present session, a PLEDGE that the said manumission shall be effected during the present conference year."

This is the report as adopted by the conference. It should be noted that it does provide for the manumission of only a part of the slaves. The original report of the committee contained a clause assigning the reason simply for not requiring the manumission of all. This clause was struck out by a vote of the conference.

The final decision in this case, after adopting the above report, was, on motion of Messrs. Collins and Emory, in the following language: "Resolved, That brother Harding be suspended until the next annual conference, or until he assures the episcopacy that he has taken the necessary steps to secure the freedom of his slaves."

The informality of this whole proceeding must be obvious to every one on the reading of the record. I will throw it into something like a legal form, such as it should have assumed before the conference.

First. THE INDICTMENT. F. A. Harding is charged with having violated the well-known usage and determined purpose of the Baltimore Annual Conference, not to tolerate slavery in any of its members.

2. *Specification.* He married Miss Swan, who was the owner of five slaves.

3. *The verdict.* That he execute, and cause to be recorded, a deed, securing the manumission of three out of five of the slaves, and that he give a pledge that this shall be effected during the present conference year.

4. *Penalty.* That he be suspended until the above conditions are submitted to—that is, *deposed from the order of the ministry.*

Now, sir, I deny the legality of the indictment—the justice of the verdict—and ask that the appellant be released from the operation of the penalty.

The indictment, I say, is illegal. He is charged with having violated the "well-known usage and determined purpose of the Baltimore Conference." Under what rule of our Discipline, sir, I would inquire, could an annual conference arraign and try a member for violating a usage or purpose of its body? The Discipline of the Church is the common charter under which any and every Methodist preacher holds his membership in an annual conference. It never before entered my mind, sir, that two opinions could exist among sane and sober-minded men on this point. The duties of an annual conference are so clearly defined in a series of plain questions at page 23 of the Discipline, and a few other separate rules in different parts of the book, that its powers cannot be a matter of doubt. They are executive only. The power to make "rules and regulations" for the government of the Church are ceded in the constitution of the Church to the General Conference only. This body has defined in the rules of Discipline the conditions of membership in an annual conference; and under this charter, and this alone, membership is held in these bodies. What rule of Methodist Discipline is he charged with violating? None, sir,—none. The committee who brought in the indictment charges him in plain terms with having acted contrary to the "usage and determined purpose" of the conference. For this, and this alone, he was tried—convicted upon his own testimony—condemned and dishonoured! The indictment does not even specify the enactment of the conference to which it makes direct reference. Did ever a more lawless procedure come to the knowledge of this body? The counsel, sir, seems to have entirely overlooked this fact, by which his cause is most fatally embarrassed—unless the paternity of abolition feeling pervading this body should shield it from the condemnation it deserves. He is bold to set forth in his argument, as the charge against Mr. Harding, "*that he knew, what ought to have been with him of pre-eminent importance, THE LAW OF THE BALTIMORE CONFERENCE.*" What law, sir? The imperfect and informal indictment does not tell us. But the counsel is free to supply the deficiency. He tells us, a law to which the case of a brother Hansberger gave rise; by which they forbid any of their members to hold slaves under any circumstances, and declared that any who might disregard the decision

"should be deemed guilty of contumacy." Here then is the law of the Baltimore Conference under which he was informally indicted. Is this a legal indictment? This question involves another. Had this conference a right to make a term of membership on the subject of slavery? Did Mr. Harding or any other member hold his membership under this legislation, or under the rules of Discipline? There surely can be no room for difference of opinion here. The conference had no such legislative powers, and all attempts to suspend the membership of Mr. Harding upon conditions defined by their legislation is wholly illegal. So confident am I of the correctness of this position, that at a proper time I may safely appeal to the bench of bishops—some one or more of whom presided in this conference—for the authority by which this was done. The matter involves higher responsibilities than that of the mere conference. Why was it that an accredited member of this conference was put upon his trial under an indictment framed upon the legislation of the Baltimore Conference? (Bishop Morris replied it was not so, he was tried for a breach of the Methodist Discipline.) Sir, you must stand corrected on this point. The document—the written indictment is proof to the contrary. The argument of counsel on this floor makes him directly responsible for a breach of the "*law of the Baltimore Conference*," on the ground that he was not ignorant of, but knew the law, its purpose, and design. The reply of the bishop (for which I thank him) is a full concession that to try him for his membership, under any law of the conference, was a wholly illegal proceeding. The indictment itself is the proof that he was so tried, and its illegality all must admit. Our bishops are sent to preside in the annual conferences, for the specific purpose of preserving a unity in the administration by keeping them within the limits defined in the charter. I repeat, therefore, that at the proper time I may request the reason of this oversight. If, then, the indictment be illegal, the verdict and penalty which arose upon it are each illegal; the whole transaction is illegal, and a reproach to the conference, and should be set aside as null and void.

2. The verdict, I say, is *unjust*, as well as illegal. He was convicted, the bishop tells us, and so the counsel argued also, for a breach of the Methodist Discipline. Allow, for the sake of argument, that this was so; it is still true, that he was not indicted—he was not charged with this offence. And can it be just to indict a man for one offence, and try him for another! Or what amounts to the same, render a verdict against him for being guilty of another! And will this body sanction a proceeding so contrary to all the forms of law, and so utterly subversive of all the principles of justice! I trust not. I can hardly persuade myself that the most rabid and fanatical feeling on the subject of slavery which can be supposed to exist in any part of this house, could betray you into a decision so violative of all the principles of right reason. But it is assumed in the argument of the counsel that the legislation of the Baltimore Conference in the case is in conformity with the rules of Discipline on the subject of slavery. Allow this to be so, it does not help the cause of the conference; for it would only be a conviction of a breach of Methodist rules *by induction* merely. No one, I presume, should contend for the legality or justice of an act depriving him of his ministerial office, held under the rules of Discipline, when he was only convicted of a violation of these rules *by induction*. And, sir, we deny all right to an annual conference to pass resolutions interpreting the rules of Discipline, and then trying their members under such resolutions, as the statutes of the Church. Such powers in an annual conference would entirely supersede the General Conference.

Again—we do not allow that the "law of the Baltimore Conference" in this case is in accordance with the Discipline of the Church on the subject of slavery. We do not therefore allow that the appellant was *justly* convicted of a breach of Methodist rule *by induction* even. I need not go over the ground occupied on this point in my first speech. I will only meet the issues raised by the argument of counsel. First. He maintains, on behalf of the conference, that the rule in relation to travelling preachers holding slaves requires an unconditional manumission, without regard to the fact whether or not the slave be permitted to enjoy his freedom under the laws of the state. He argues a distinction in the rules as to apply to members or to local preachers, and to travelling preachers. Sir, I propose to meet his argument fairly and squarely. He maintains that the rule, standing as the second answer to the questions on slavery, page 196, requires the travelling preacher to manumit his slaves, whether the laws permit them to enjoy freedom within the state or not. (If I do not state him correctly, let him put me right.) Now, sir, let it be regarded that the *first* answer in this section of Dis-

discipline, in which there is no ambiguity of language, settles the entire question of eligibility to office in the Church, so far as slavery is concerned, eligibility to any order in the ministry, to any office in the Church. The rule in regard to travelling preachers was passed in 1800. This, which covers the whole ground of eligibility, was adopted in 1816. It may therefore be taken as a fair exponent of the point in the former, which is supposed to be doubtful. Again, sir, the counsel overlooks the fact, in criticising this point, that the travelling preacher is only required to execute a "deed of emancipation" in this specified condition, "if it be practicable." Now surely, sir, it was not the design to require the mere execution of a deed! *This, at all times, is practicable.* The meaning of the rule is plainly this: it requires a travelling preacher to secure the *actual freedom* of his slaves, "conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives," "if it be practicable"—that is, if the laws will permit them to enjoy liberty.

But it is further argued, that Harding's case is not covered by the rule of Discipline, because the laws of Maryland *do permit* the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom. I will not go over this point, which has been set before the conference in the most satisfactory manner by reading the laws of the state, accompanied by the opinions of two gentlemen of great legal distinction in the state of Maryland, showing beyond doubt that this position of the counsel in the case is incorrect. Again, sir, if this were a doubtful point in itself, we have shown in opening this case, from the express statute of the state of Maryland, and the highest legal opinion upon it, Judge Key and the Hon. W. D. Merrick, both of Maryland, that Mr. Harding had no interest in the slaves of his wife further than what related to the proceeds of their labour. *He could not, without the consent of his wife, execute a legal deed of emancipation, as he was required by the conference to do.* I do not know that a similar law exists in any state in this Union. So that if the laws of any state in the confederacy cover the case of any member in the Church who has become possessed of slaves by marriage—the case of Mr. Harding is protected by the laws of the state in which he lives. Indeed, sir, it appeared to me that the counsel after all yielded this question—if my ear correctly caught his meaning. He argued vehemently against the laws of Maryland as most iniquitous in their tendency—such as no man ought to submit to. In this, sir, he yielded the point—and I claim the decision on behalf of the appellant. Surely this body will not give a decision in the teeth of state legislation, and also of an article of our religious faith, acknowledging the authority of the civil legislature, and an express statute in the book of Discipline.

One other point, sir. Brother Collins allows what was implied by the silence of brother Tippet, that if the appellant had been understood to "pledge himself and his wife, if the slaves should consent, to send them to Liberia, or to a free state, this case had never come here." The record itself, which has been read before this conference, shows that he refused to give the required "pledge" *on the ground that he could not do it consistently with the laws of the state.* (I quote from memory—the journal not being before me.) This fully warrants the inference that he stood pledged to free his slaves, on the terms provided by law—nay, the record committed him to do this. The law allows of emancipation, provided they will leave the state. The journal, therefore, is against the position of the counsel; for it is a fair inference from the record, that he was ready to free his slaves, with their consent to leave the state. This pledge necessarily involved the consent of his wife, who held the legal title. The recollection of brother Gere is therefore correct, and that of the other members of the delegation is at fault. The counsel is still further at fault. He affirmed, over and over again, that the argument urged by me, from the late law of Maryland, fixing the legal title to the slaves of Mrs. Harding, was an after thought—that he never heard of it before. This is particularly unfortunate, for he allows that the legal opinion of the Hon. W. D. Merrick was before the conference; and in this he specifically alludes to the fact, that the legal title to the slaves was in Mrs. Harding, and not in him. And yet, in the face of this clearly-implied pledge, and the proof of utter inability to effect the legal emancipation of the slaves without their consent, so rabid were they to effect an abolition purpose, that they expelled him the body.

Then, sir, I maintain the appellant violated no rule of Discipline. He only violated a law of the Baltimore Conference—a law which they had no right to make, and which, being made, is a plain and palpable contravention of the existing rule of Discipline on the subject. The indictment, then, is illegal; the verdict is equally unjust; and the penalty, by consequence, unwarranted and oppressive.

The 23d article of our faith acknowledges the supreme authority of the state in all civil matters. The conference act specifically subjects our rules on slavery to be controlled by state legislation. This, be it observed, is in special conformity with the article of religion just alluded to. It has been shown, from the statutes of Maryland, that the legal title to these slaves *was not* in Mr. Harding, but in his wife: It is further shown, that if the title *was* in Harding, that he could not secure the freedom of the slaves without compelling them to go to Liberia, or to a free state. Now, if the decision of this conference sustain the Baltimore Conference, you will require Harding to execute a legal deed, manumitting slave property which does not belong to him. You also require him to secure their freedom, contrary to the provisions of the laws of the state, (provided they *were* his,) which allows of their freedom only when they consent to leave the state. In all this will you not place yourselves in the most ridiculous attitude before the world? Will you not perpetrate a most wanton act of injustice toward the appellant? Will you not adopt a measure the most reckless of the claims of humanity that can be imagined? For, if Mr. Harding obeys your mandate, and manumits the slaves, without their consent to leave the state, *they will be forced*, under the operation of the civil authority, to dissolve the ties which now bind parents to children and other near relatives. In addition to this, you set up your authority in the premises as *supreme*, in plain and palpable violation of the 23d article of religion, and the rule of Discipline in conformity thereto, which binds you, in the most solemn manner, to be subject to the civil legislature on the subject of slavery. Are you prepared for all this?

Again: Mr. Harding was tried according to the indictment brought in by the committee, not for a breach of your Discipline, but for a violation, of a law of the Baltimore Conference. If you sustain the conference, you acknowledge the authority of an annual conference to legislate laws or conditions of membership in the body, in palpable violation of the constitution and Discipline of the Church, which assigns this authority to the General Conference alone. Are you prepared for this?

And still further. The law of the Baltimore Conference, under which the appellant was bound, is not only unauthorized by the Discipline, but in flat violation of the compromise act of Discipline. If you sustain the conference, you render null and void the plain construction of the Discipline under which hundreds of travelling and local ministers now hold office and orders in the Church. Are you prepared for all this? Surely you are not, unless you are prepared to dissolve the bonds which bind us together as a confederated body. I ask, then, that you sustain the appeal, and release Francis A. Harding from the act of the Baltimore Conference by which he stands suspended from the ministry, which he has held with acceptability and usefulness for several years.

But if, after all, you should feel yourselves still in difficulty on any one point of argument or testimony out of which the foregoing conclusions are made to arise, then let it be remembered that the reading of the journal shows a manifest informality, while the face of the indictment itself is without all due form of law or usage, and well calculated to embarrass the decision. In view of this fact, the least the appellant has a right to expect is, that you should return him for a new trial. With these remarks, sir, I submit the case.

The conference then adjourned.

SATURDAY, MAY 11.

Dr. Smith asked permission to make some further observations, of a personal character, in reference to Mr. Harding.

Considerable opposition was made to this, on the ground that both parties had been allowed a most extended and patient hearing, and that it was time the debate was closed.

The motion was put, and carried.

Dr. Smith said it would be remembered that a motion to locate Mr. Harding had been made at the Baltimore Conference; that either, on suggestion, it was withdrawn, or, being ruled out, the motion fell to the ground. He believed the reason of that movement was, that the only proper ground for location is unacceptability, which could not be alleged in this case. An impression, however, in consequence of that motion, having gone abroad prejudicial to the character of the appellant, either as to his prudence, or talent, or general acceptability, he (Dr. S.) begged the conference to bear in mind that even were such impressions correct, the question before them was, the legality or the illegality of his suspension on the ground alleged in the record, and that alone was the question for their decision. At the same time

he took that opportunity of saying, that the impression, however it might have been circulated, was altogether false.

Mr. Collins said that Dr. Smith had mistaken the reason of the withdrawal of the motion for location. The true reason was, that it was thought that rule was not the proper one to be applied to him, and that the rule under which he had been tried was the proper one.

At the close of these observations the call for the vote became general, and Mr. Early moved that the decision of the Baltimore Conference be reversed. The same being seconded, was put, and a call made for the ayes and noes. The secretary proceeded to read the names. Dr. Olin desired to be excused, on the ground that he had not heard the journals read, and had only heard a portion of the debates. Sometimes it was a pleasant thing to avoid a responsibility; but in this case he had no disposition to shrink from responsibility, and would much rather have voted, but he could not do it conscientiously.

The conference excused him.

The secretary announced the votes to be, noes 117, ayes 56; being a majority against the reversal of 61.

The President announced that this vote affirmed the decision of the Baltimore Conference. The decision of the chair was appealed against, but was sustained by a vote of 111 to 53.—(See p. 240.)

Dr. Smith. I must, and do, ask the privilege of spreading my protest on the pages of the conference journal, and I do so because, to my own personal knowledge, there are men on the floor of this house who voted against the resolution of Mr. Early because they deliberately and solemnly thought that the matter ought to go back to the Baltimore Conference. But by a majority we have been ruled out and a fair decision of this conference has not been given. And I wish my protest to go forth to the American Church, and American people, to serve as a beacon-light to warn the Church against the movements of a majority who can obliterate justice and trample on the rights of a minority.

A long conversation arose as to whether the vote refusing to reverse the decision of the Baltimore Conference confirmed that decision. A multiplicity of motions and amendments were made, but eventually the discussion turned upon Dr. Smith's request to enter his protest. It was moved that he have liberty to enter the same when Mr. Wiley said they had better wait and see what it was first, and then the could decide whether it should be entered upon the journal or not.

Dr. Smith said he trusted he knew too well what was due to himself as a gentleman, to those that acted with him, and to the conference generally, to address them in any other than respectful terms; but if they thought the paper would be what they would like, they would find themselves mistaken. No! they would not like that paper, for it would contain truths that would burn in their cheeks. (Cries "order," &c.) I am perfectly calm. I have got the floor, and you have got the votes; and you can, having the votes, put me down. Time was when such excitement would have unarmed me, and thrown me off my defence; but no storm of excitement can now disarm me of my self-possession. You cannot drive me from my position; and you might as well attempt to chain the lightnings, or confine the winds in the caves of Eolus, as to put me down when I have a right to be heard. I shall prepare such a memorial as will fearlessly and thoughtfully express the sentiments of myself, and those that think with me; and no consideration shall induce me to speak with timidity or fear at such a crisis.

Mr. Early said he hoped they would remember that large majorities were apt to be tyrannical—he trusted they would keep calm. He was quite so—as much as the affliction in which that vote had involved him, and those around him, would allow. After some further conversation, the order of the day was resumed.

MONDAY, MAY 13.

Appeal of Bradford Frazee.

The appeal of Mr. Frazee against the action of the Michigan Conference locating him without his consent, was taken up.

A conversation arose as to the right of appeal in this case, and Bishop Soule said this was a question of law, and one of great importance to every member of the body. He wished them to understand that the superintendents claimed no right to settle law questions. You (said he) must settle those, and we are bound to carry them out—sacredly bound to carry out as you shall give us the interpretation of. And I should be glad to hear the opinion of brethren of experience on the mat-

I was present, and presided at the conference in question. Brother Frazee came up on his letter from New-York, with a primary and secondary request. The up on his request was, that he should be left without an appointment. Here I announced that I could not leave a brother without an appointment, whom they had left in my hands as an effective man; and to the secondary request I replied, that I could not give a nominal appointment, to be filled by somebody else. As your superintendent I thus announced my views in the case, and in all probability this influenced the Michigan Conference.

Mr. Crowder did not expect from the President's suggestion to shed any particular light on the subject. The clause of Discipline which had been read assumes that a brother unacceptable to the people may be located, and the Discipline points out how the conference may get rid of him. But it does not appear that any question of the sort was put in against this brother, and therefore it does not appear that the action of the Michigan Conference can be considered as having reference to such case. Did they act correctly in locating him? It appeared to him, (Mr. C.,) from such statements and facts as had come out, that the conference believed his request to be, primarily, to be left without an appointment or else to be located. But the brother did not intend such a thing, so that the question came up, where is that action to be corrected? In the annual conference, or in the General Conference?

Mr. Bowen supposed that the bishop would have given him an appointment if the conference had not taken him out of his hands. And if he had been appointed, and had not gone to his work, he would have been brought up for neglecting it, and then he would have had an appeal to the General Conference. It appeared to him that the brother should be heard before that body.

Dr. Winans said, a thousand causes might intervene to prevent his attending the next annual conference—(some member having stated that that was the right course for him to pursue)—and he might thus be kept in suspense five years, by missing one General Conference before he came up to them for redress.

Mr. Griffith thought they had mistaken the true ground on which the right of appeal had to be settled. The brother first desired no appointment, then to serve by proxy, and failing in each of these applications, gave notice of his intention to desist from travelling for one year. The conference, therefore, by locating him, had put him just where he wished to put himself.

Mr. Smith, of the Michigan Conference, said it was his intention to raise a question on the case, but not on the ground that had been taken. The case was this: The Discipline says, that where an elder should desist from travelling, he should be suspended. This brother ceased to travel, and the question is, after saying that he could not travel, and the conference assenting, had he now the right to appeal?

Mr. Crane entered more minutely into the case, taking the same view, but the hour of adjournment arriving, the conference refused to extend the time.

TUESDAY, MAY 14.

The appeal of Mr. Frazee against his location by the Michigan Conference was called for, and the conference having agreed to receive his appeal, he proceeded to state the grounds on which he objected to their decision.

He appealed on the ground of illegality in the action of said conference.

First. The plea or reason assigned was illegal. Where a rule gives definite power, on a specific plea, that power is understood to be prohibited in every other case.

The rule on which the conference acted is to be found in section 19, chapter i, page 67, and in answer to question 4, and gives the conference permission to locate a brother who may have been complained of as unacceptable in the work. This rule Mr. F. contended was given for that specific case, and was inoperative in any other case. That in his case there was no such complaint, there was no such ground, and yet they had acted upon that rule, and therefore illegally.

Secondly. It was conducted in a manner not in accordance with the provisions of the Discipline. Section 19, chapter i, page 67, says, it shall be the duty of the conference to investigate the case. The conference in his case did not do so. Neither did the conference allow him an opportunity to amend or retire, both which the Discipline requires. The journal of the conference showed that, and therefore on this ground also his location without his consent was illegal.

There was considerable stress laid upon the letter he wrote. That letter was addressed as a private letter to his presiding elder, written in haste, and with no expectation that it would go before conference, and containing nothing affecting his membership, except the last clause, which was underscored, "*I am unwilling*

to locate." Now it was in evidence that the conference brought in a resolution with the intention of immediate action in the premises, stating that he had quitted his work, and moving his suspension. That motion was lost. Then they said, he had signified his intention not to labour among them during the ensuing year. Now the substance and purport of that letter was this. He found his business required his attention, and therefore wrote his presiding elder to that effect, requesting, as a favour, that he might be left without an appointment for the ensuing year. This request he made with great delicacy; and though it might be contrary to the resolution to grant such indulgence, it was yet freely accorded in practice. And he (Mr. F.) also made a second request, that, if the other were denied him, he might at least have an appointment that he could get supplied. This too was often done. But this request, also, the conference denied him, and located him; and since there was a remedy he thought it best to endeavour to obtain redress.

Mr. Smith, of the Michigan Conference, replied. Their conference had desired to keep the system of itinerancy untrammelled. He thought that if it was found that they had acted without the law, they had not acted contrary to law; and if without precedent, they had nevertheless given a common-sense decision, which the General Conference would sustain them in. He was aware that many members might be disposed to reverse the decision of the annual conference, because they had not passed the full sentence of the law in the case. He wished to speak to that moment. See sec. 6, on page 32 of the Discipline. Many members of the conference thought that was the rule on which the annual conference should act. But brother Frazee, while he had notified his intention to cease to travel, had not ceased, and they therefore could not condemn him under that rule. Then the question arose, how should they meet the case? They could not throw him into the hands of the bishop; nor could they grant his request without violating the great principles of itinerancy, and flying in the face of the General Conference. What were they to do? They wished to dispose of the case righteously, and they had acted upon principles that applied to the case.

Mr. Frazee made his rejoinder, but it involved no principles beyond what he had previously laid down.

The General Conference reversed the decision of the Michigan Conference

Drs. Capers' and Olin's Resolution—Committee of Pacification.

Dr. Capers and Dr. Olin presented the following resolution:—

"In view of the distracting agitation which has so long prevailed on the subject of slavery and abolition, and especially the difficulties under which we labour in the present General Conference, on account of the relative position of our brethren north and south on this perplexing question, therefore,

"Resolved, That a committee of three from the north and three from the south be appointed to confer with the bishops, and report within two days as to the possibility of adopting some plan, and what, for the permanent pacification of the Church."

A member moved as an amendment that three delegates from the middle states be added to the committee.

Dr. Capers said, There are only two points named in the resolution, slavery and abolition. I presume there must have been such an interpretation put upon the resolution as the writer did not mean. I did not intend to say that this General Conference was made up of either pro-slavery men or abolitionists, and that there is a third party, who are neither. The question has only two sides, slaveholders and non-slaveholders. These two positions present, perhaps, in their different aspects, the general state of the Church. Two interests only are generally recognised; and in providing for the committee, I am far from intending to say, that all the brethren in the non-slaveholding states are abolitionists, any more than that the others are all slaveholders. If in this view I am mistaken I am unfortunate.

A motion to lay the amendment on the table was made, and Dr. Durbin, and almost at the same moment Dr. Olin also, rose. Dr. Durbin offered to give way, but the chair said that Dr. Olin could not speak to the original motion, and Dr. Durbin proceeded. He hoped the amendment would not prevail. He understood Dr. Capers to mean by the north, non-slaveholding states, (Dr. Capers assented,) and that the chair could appoint either from the north, east, or west.

The motion to lay the amendment on the table was carried.

Dr. Olin spoke to the original motion. He spoke under the most powerful emotion, and in a strain of tenderness that moved every member of the conference.

he said he felt, from his relation to the conference as a member for the first time, became him to explain why his name was attached to the resolution. It had been shown to him within five minutes, and he had asked upon it the advice of one whose opinion was entitled to great weight. He could not refuse to second it, knowing it was offered in a spirit of conciliation. He had feared for these two or three days that, though possibly they might escape the disasters that threatened them, it was not probable. He had seen the cloud gathering, so dark that it seemed to him there was no hope left for them unless God should give them hope. It might be from his relation to both extremities, that; inferior as might be his means of forming conclusions on other topics, he had some advantages on this; and from an intimate acquaintance with the feelings of his brethren in the work, he saw little ground for encouragement to hope. It appears to me (he continued) that we stand committed to this question by our principles and views of policy, and neither of us dare move a step from our position. Let us keep away from the controversy until brethren from opposite sides have come together. I confess I turn away from it with sorrow, and a deep feeling of apprehension that the difficulties that are upon us now threaten to be unmanageable. I feel it in my heart, and never felt on any subject as I do on this. I may take it for granted that we speak as opponents here. I have had no part in this controversy. It has pleased God that I should be far away, or laid upon my bed of sickness. I have my opinions and attachments, but I am committed by my act of mine to either side; and I will take it on me to say freely that I do not see why northern men can yield their ground, or southern men give up theirs. I do indeed believe, that if our affairs remain in their present position, and this General Conference do not speak out clearly and distinctly on the subject, however unpalatable it may be, we cannot go home under this distracting question without a certainty of breaking up our conferences. I have been to eight or ten of the northern conferences, and spoken freely with men of every class, and firmly believe, that with the fewest exceptions, they are influenced by the most ardent and the strongest desire to maintain the Discipline of our Church. Will the southern men believe me in this—when I say I am sincere, and well informed on the subject? The men who stand here as abolitionists are as ardently attached to Methodist episcopacy as you all. I believe it in my heart. Your northern brethren, who seem to you to be arrayed in a hostile attitude, have suffered a great deal before they have taken their position, and they come up here distressed beyond measure, and disposed, if they believed they could, without destruction and ruin to the Church, to make concession. It may be that both parties will consent to come together and talk over the matter freely, and unbosom themselves, and speak all that is in their hearts; and as lovers of Christ keep out passion and prejudice, and with much prayer call down the Holy Spirit upon their deliberations, and feeling the dire necessity that oppresses both parties, they will at least endeavour to adopt some plan of pacification, that if they away it may not be without hope of meeting again as brethren. I look to this measure with desire rather than with hope. With regard to our southern brethren, I hold that on this question, at least, I may speak with some confidence—they concede what the northern brethren wish—if they concede that holding slaves is incompatible with holding their ministry—they may as well go to the Rocky Mountains as to their own sunny plains. The people would not bear it. They feel it up to their principles on this point. They love the cause, and would serve it in their work. I believe there is not a man among them that would not make every sacrifice, and even die, if thereby he could heal this division. But if our difficulties are unmanageable, let our spirit be right. If we must part, let us meet and pour out our tears together; and let us not give up until we have tried. I came to this conference yesterday morning to offer another resolution. It was that we should suspend, now that the sabbath had intervened, and shed its calmness and quiet over our agitated spirits, that we should suspend our duties for one day, and devote it to fasting and prayer, that God may help us, so that, if we have not union, we may have peace. This resolution partakes of the same spirit. I cannot speak of this subject without deep emotion. If we push our principles so far as to break the connection, this may be the last time we meet. I fear it! I fear it! I fear it! If we find any, it will be in mutual moderation, in calling for help from the God of our fathers, and in looking upon each other as we were wont to do. These are the general objects I had in view in seconding the resolution, as they are of him who moved it.

The reverend gentleman sat down amid the most deep and hallowed excitement, and the responsive prayers of the whole conference.

Dr. Durbin had but a word to say. He could never forget the scene before him that morning. Dr. Olin had said that he scarcely indulged the hope, though he felt a strong desire, that the measure proposed would be successful. For himself, he thought he could discern light, notwithstanding the darkness that hung around the question; and he felt not only a *desire*, but a strong *hope*, that they should yet be delivered from the dangers which impended over their heads. Yes, he clung to the hope of the continued unity of the Church. Abraham, in great difficulties, believed in hope against hope, and yet most gloriously realized his hope, and became the father of many nations. He said he saw ground for this hope in the tenderness of spirit which had been manifested so generally since the introduction of the resolution; and he felt now, as he had felt since his arrival in the city, the most confident assurance that brethren of all parties would sacrifice everything but their ulterior principles, for the continued unity of the Church. Dr. Olin had told them very justly, that if they said *slavery, under all circumstances*, is incompatible with the functions of the Gospel ministry, they put their brethren in the south in a position which must destroy all hopes of usefulness on their part in the Church. Sir, (continued, Dr. D.,) we have not said this; we cannot say it; the committee will not say it. I do not believe our gallant vessel is yet to be unloosed from her moorings. She was exposed to a dangerous rock in the south, and an equally dangerous one in the north. There is an open sea between them. The brethren of the north will not drive us upon the rock in the south, if the brethren in the south will not drive us upon the rock in the north. If the committee address themselves to the difficulties in the spirit which now pervades the conference, we shall yet see brighter and better days. The two days, during which the committee will have this subject under consideration, will be an era in the history of Methodism, and I think that one of them at least should be observed as a day of fasting and prayer. The Wesleyan Conference in England, after the death of Mr. Wesley, was on the brink, apparently, of dissolution, and yet the wise counsel of a few brethren, and the compromising spirit of the general body, devised a plan of permanent pacification. I would say, then, let every heart and tongue be quiet during these momentous two days. It is almost in my heart to say, Cursed be he that shall speak a word to inflame or exasperate any one, while this subject is in the hands of the committee.

Dr. Luckey thought six too small a number for such committee.

Dr. Capers explained, that the number would bear some relation to the number in the episcopacy; though no high-Methodist—he disliked the term—he had so long been accustomed to look for divine direction through those bishops, that he had a kind of faith that way. It might be superstitious, perhaps; but he had a feeling of that kind. They knew the way to God on their behalf so well, they had been so used to it, that he relied very much upon their decision, and he thought a committee of six would be more generally acceptable.

Mr. Drake, in a very earnest speech, deprecated the idea of a division. He hoped never to see the day when division should be spoken of as probable. The cords of love were too strong, he believed, for any such lamentable catastrophe to take place. He did not believe that ever a Church divided since the world began in which there was so much personal and Christian attachment, and love between its ministers, as in their connection at present. He prayed God to avert such a dire calamity from them. He should, if the conference approved, like a day appointed for fasting and prayer.

Mr. Crandall spoke at considerable length. He said he was as much for conciliation as any man, and did not wish to disturb the good feeling that at present existed in the conference. But there was a dark shade of difference between the brethren of the two extremes. He supposed he should be taken as standing on one extreme. As such, they were standing on a volcano, which might, at any moment, destroy them. He had learned one thing by this movement. When a brother, who was long remarkable for his want of interest and activity in the affairs of the Church, suddenly became warm and zealous, it awakened suspicions. He had his eye fixed upon such a one now. But what was the pretext for this reform movement? Why, there was slavery in the Church, and the Church tolerated it. And they must meet it. But had the north shown any disposition for a division? Not at all. He did not know a man in the north that desired division. He hoped that, before they took any action in the matter, they would understand it.

Mr. Early made some very able remarks on the spirit pervading the conference, and the spirit that he trusted would pervade the committee—the spirit of prayer,

love, and forbearance. He would assure the conference that the south were prepared to make any concessions in the same spirit, so far as they could without affecting their essential principles.

Dr. Smith rose amidst calls for the question. He regretted that, at such a time, any impatience to get a vote should be manifested. So deeply did he sympathize with the feeling now prevailing in the conference, that he could find it in his heart to continue under its influence for hours to come. He had never for one moment—as those acquainted with his private sentiments could testify—cherished the desire for division. The south did not desire it. He knew that, in saying this, he was expressing the common sentiment of the whole southern Church. True, at Cincinnati, in 1836, the members of the General Conference, from conferences within slaveholding states, were supposed to have taken measures preliminary to disunion. But that was a mistake. Their course was dictated by a sincere desire to preserve the union, by staving off those incipient measures, which, if persisted in, it was foreseen would ultimate in this disastrous and much-to-be-deprecated result. No! the south did *not* desire disunion. Come when it may, it should be forced upon them. He had too much confidence in the fidelity and justice of his northern brethren to cherish the conviction for one moment that they would force division upon them. What, sir, divide! Never! Nor did he agree that civil war, as had been intimated, was likely to come upon them. He had no fear of civil disunion and war.

Mr. Dow thought Dr. Smith was out of order in these allusions to division and civil war.

Mr. Crandall was delighted with the spirit of Dr. Smith, and hoped he would not be interrupted.

Dr. Smith concluded his remarks by saying, No, sir, we have no fears of civil war. We have higher and more appropriate reasons for wishing to preserve our long-cherished union. The days for civil war in this country have gone by. Difficulties in the national legislature would hereafter be settled by negotiation. And shall we adopt any less pacific course in this great council of the Church? He hoped not.

On motion of Mr. Collins, the words “a committee of six” were substituted for the words “a committee of three from the south and three from the north,” and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15.

Indian Mission Conference.

Mr. Ames explained, in reference to a remark from Mr. Early two or three days ago, that the bishop attending the conference had the veto power in all appropriations, and that would prove a sufficient check on the expenditures. He further alluded to the importance of the subject generally, and noticed it as somewhat singular, that so many Churches should go so far to seek subjects for their missions. The Indians embraced in this report were not wandering hunters, nor roving vagabonds through the forest, but they followed trades, and had a permanent home, holding their land by a patent from the government of the United States.

Mr. Slicer thought the project a good one. It was well known that most of the tribes were hostile one to another, and he presumed this plan would bring them together in more friendly relationship. He supposed that the native preachers, when raised up, would be admitted into the conference, which would materially aid in the work of softening down the asperities of the various tribes, as it would bring their influential men together. He thought, however, it ought to go to the Committee on Boundaries, that they might conform their arrangements thereto.

Mr. Ames said, there were but two conferences affected by it, and they but nominally, for they did not occupy the mission territory.

Mr. McFerrin said, I have some little acquaintance with the Indian missions embraced in the report of the committee. The Indians, notwithstanding their being permanently located, are still a wandering people, and many of them gain their livelihood by the chase; and I do not think their standing, either in a moral, religious, or intellectual point of view, is sufficient to justify their having a separate annual conference. You will cut off the sympathy existing between the Indian tribes and the conferences next to them. Many of the brethren labour there under the direction of the bishops, and take it “time about,” as we do in our country with all our work. But when you come to confine the ministers entirely to that work, you will destroy the sympathy at present existing toward the Indians, and there

will be a shrinking back on the part of other brethren from the work. I was a missionary among the Cherokee Indians for two years, and it was the brightest period of my life. But I should not wish to stay there for life; but after labouring there for two or three years, let others go and share the honour as well as labour of the work.

Dr. Bangs would allow that there were objections against this conference being established; but there were also advantages which he thought more than counterbalanced the disadvantages. One objection raised was, that they would have the appropriation of their own funds. But then the responsibility would be with the president of the conference, and the missionary committee cannot appropriate anything without the consent of the conference, so that the Discipline already provided a powerful check. This conference would probably become one of the largest conferences, numerically, in the Union. They were not cutting off a conference, as in the case of Liberia.

Mr. Finley also thought that the advantages would decidedly overbalance the disadvantages. By making them a separate annual conference it brought the various tribes near, and into connection with each other. It had been urged, as an objection to the organization of this conference, that it afforded no opportunity for the preachers occasionally changing with each other. It should be remembered, however, that it required a pretty long continuance with an Indian to get his confidence. He had remarked this ever since he was a boy. This arrangement would bring them into contact, and under the influence of their pastors, and thus do away with any feelings, national or otherwise, that might interfere with their cordial union. Religion had a wonderful tendency to consolidate friendships, and this was an important consideration. He really could not see any substantial objection to the proposal of the committee, but could see glorious benefits resulting from it. It would bring the tribes together, so that they would be able, perhaps ere long, to form and establish some general system of government for themselves.

Mr. Ratcliff came to the General Conference decidedly opposed to this measure, and he believed he represented the feeling of his conference on the subject. He thought there was a danger of the preachers, by being too long among the Indians, becoming Indians themselves. He felt, also, that there was considerable advantage in having the mission regulated by white people; and perhaps the Indians coming into contact with the white population would have beneficial results, as they would thus learn our language to some extent, and our general manners and customs. On the whole, he had some doubts upon the subject, and should, he thought, vote against it.

Mr. Berryman would offer a few remarks on the objections brought against this plan. It would be found necessary for a missionary to remain among the Indians more than two years, not only to obtain their confidence, but for his own information also. We know as little about them as they do about us. We take them to be a suspicious, vindictive people. He had these prejudices on first going among them as a missionary, and it was a long time before he could look upon them in any other light. But time had greatly altered his views in that respect. Again: It had been said that there would be great difficulty in finding men who would consent to a residence among them for life. Men had gone, with the understanding that they were to try it for a year or two; but longer than that they did not intend to prolong the sacrifice. And having gone with this understanding, and having met with difficulties, they had become discouraged, and looking to the end of the year for their release, were discontented continually, instead of earnestly going to work and contending with their difficulties until they had conquered them. Such would be far more likely to be their course, if they knew that there was no early prospect of deliverance from them. As to learning the language, there could be no doubt that the missionaries would be much more successful if they could converse with the Indians in their own language, instead of through an interpreter. Even now, if he (Mr. B.) thought he had to stay long with them, he would endeavour to become more an Indian than he was now. He did not see any force in that objection.

And again, did the General Conference expect or desire that these Indian missions should always hang upon them for support? But that would be the case if they were always to be dependant upon another conference. Whereas, if you separate them, and give them a conference of their own, native preachers may be raised up, whom, with their families, the Indians would cheerfully support. But they would never support a white man's family. There are about twenty odd tribes proposed to be embraced by this conference. They are distinct from each other,

speaking different languages, and very few of them understand each other. They have no common ties binding them together. Taken separately, they are a small people; but taken in the aggregate, they number 60,000 and upward; and immediately on their borders are many other tribes, embraced also in this proposed conference, which extends to the Rocky Mountains. Some of the tribes backward number 60,000 to 70,000 to a tribe. And they are noble fellows, though still living the lives of hunters. The time, however, will come when they can no longer subsist in that way, because the herds of buffalo and elk will be exhausted, and they must then settle down to cultivate the soil. The establishment of a conference will promote and extend the Christian bonds of union. The effects that will result from it are already partially shown in the INDIAN MANUAL LABOUR SCHOOL, of which I am superintendent. We had (said Mr. B.) for a number of years been labouring to educate the Indian children. We had a small school connected with the mission, and from each tribe located there we took a few children into this school. All of the same tribe spoke the same language. Brought thus together, they would converse with those of their own language, but they could not speak a word of English. At a meeting of all the missionaries, we determined on establishing a central school, that they might thus be compelled to speak the English tongue. The result has far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Prejudices are being wiped away. The same result will attend an annual conference in the territory. We feel that we shall be losers as it regards sympathy. Mr. B. then went on to say that the conferences there were composed on the same plan as all others; and it must be obvious that their missionary committee, to whom were confided all missionary matters, had not time to suggest and mature any new plans of operation. But the whole business of this conference would be of a missionary character, and what they lost in sympathy they gained in another way.

Mr. Rounds said, so far as it regarded sympathy, he thought the proposed conference would give an increased interest in the sympathies of the missionaries. The men who should be stationed among the Indians under the proposed regulations would give their hearts to it entirely; whereas, when they were only appointed for one year or two, their hearts were prone to be somewhere else. It was a reflection upon Christianity, and an objection that would be fatal to missionary enterprise, to say that the missionaries were more likely to sink than the Indians to rise. We did not live in a day that required us to argue a position of that kind. We are not going to be "overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good." He would also add, so far as regarded "sacrifices" in reference to appointments, the M. E. Church had boldly proclaimed herself a missionary Church, and her sentiment was, that her preachers were bound to go wherever they were sent.

Mr. M'Ferrin said, if you could always have such men as the brethren Rounds and Berryman, there would be no danger in their remaining any length of time. They would never alter. But it is far from being so. As the arrangements now stand, you have two whole conferences from which to select men fit for the purpose, and still find it difficult to get the men you want. It behooves us to guard the door, or you will have the mission field crowded with inexperienced men. Brethren talk of "disparagement of Christianity." Why, sir, you know, as I do, that many of our missionaries have identified themselves with the Indians by marriage. They have become citizens, and then entered into trade and traffic. As to the spirit of sacrifice, let brethren make the same sacrifice, and then they might turn to us with this plea. I cannot go for it—I do not think they are ready for it. The country is too new, and the Indians not sufficiently improved. And I will venture to predict, that after an experiment of four years, you will find that the work has not been carried on as you expect.

Mr. Trimble said, that at the introduction of the subject he had the same feelings toward it that Mr. M'Ferrin now had, but the arguments of the missionary from that mission field converted him. He did not see the difficulties his brother saw, and thought that labourers would be increased as they were required. The God of the work would raise up the men for the work. He believed in a call to the missionary field as much as he did in the call to preach.

Mr. Green was once an Indian in all but birth. With them he lived, hunted, fished, talked, ate, and slept. He learned their art of running, wrestling, throwing the ball, &c. They entertain against all strangers a strong prejudice. He thought the best they could do was to make of the west of America a separate conference. It was not always the case that men succeeded in what they wished to do; but they never succeeded in what they did not wish to do. Now no brother

would become a member of that conference unless he was willing to become a missionary. As to fixing the amount of salary, it was as difficult one way as another. The report was then adopted and referred to the Committee on Boundaries, that they might conform their action thereto.

FRIDAY, MAY 17.

Scriptures in the Liturgy.

Attention was called by Bishop Soule, in consequence of a communication he had received from a highly-respectable member of the Church, well known to the western ministers, to the alteration of the passages of Scripture required by the Discipline to be read preparatory to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, so as to conform to the phraseology of the present version of the Scriptures.

Dr. Peck said he had viewed the subject with much interest. He wished the conference would instruct the Committee on Revision to consider the propriety of conforming all the passages of Scripture used in the liturgy to the version of the Scriptures now in use. He saw no reason for their using the antiquated version of Cranmer, as in the Common Prayer. He had no such veneration for that book as would reconcile him to the use of a different version of the Scriptures in the public services from the one in common use, merely because Churchmen are therein required to do so.

Temperance Question.

Mr. J. T. Peck called up so much of the report of the Committee on Revision as related to temperance, which was to the effect that no members should use as a beverage, or manufacture, or traffic in intoxicating liquors, on pain of expulsion after remonstrance. He spoke of the evils of intemperance. It was doing "harm" to society, to the individual, soul and body, wife and children, and was an evil in every relation we hold to God and as followers of Christ; a "harm" that was irremediable. The question therefore was, what ought to be the Discipline in the case? Under what rule should it be banished from the Church? What would you do with the men who erect the still behind which the drunkard hid himself? The rule proposed to be inserted in the Discipline met the evil. It proposed that the brother should first be remonstrated with, and if that failed, let him be visited with the severity of Discipline. At present the law did not reach such cases, though he believed that one conference had decided to apply the general law forbidding "doing harm" to this case. Others doubt whether the law will bear that construction. We want to rid the Church of such a disgrace, and wish the conference to speak out plainly on the subject, that there may be uniformity of action throughout the annual conferences.

Dr. Smith moved that the report and resolution lie on the table. Not that he wanted to get rid of it, for he wished to discuss it at some length, but he moved that it lie on the table at present, because he wished time and a more fitting opportunity of stating his objections to it.

The motion to lay on the table was lost.

Dr. Smith then continued, and expressed his regret that the conference would not of courtesy extend to a member, on a subject of this magnitude and importance, the time he asked for the consideration of the subject. And though he feared from the refusal to let it lie on the table that the mind of the conference was pretty well made up on the subject, he should meet it as well as he could by some impromptu remarks. So far as he could understand the report, they proposed to incorporate with the Discipline a rule which ultimately results in the dismembership of those who might infringe its provisions. Now he asked upon what authority did the General Conference proceed to make a new term of membership, without the consent of the several annual conferences? There was the point! And this measure was the more objectionable for this reason. Four years ago they attempted to introduce this rule into the general rules, but the movement failed. The annual conferences would not give their consent—the constitutional authority could not be obtained.

Dr. Bangs said it was obtained by a large majority.

Dr. Smith continued. It was not put in, because the report of Dr. Tomlinson maintained that the alteration in the general rule had not been legally recommended. And now, sir, said Dr. S., the friends of this movement come round, and seek to avoid the constitutional difficulty, and wish to steal this measure into another sec-

tion of the Discipline. Is this right and proper? What do you call this? Why, in the language current in a certain part of your city, it is "*fluxions*," if I am correctly informed as to the meaning of that word as it floats through the streets of New-York. Sir, I am opposed to any such mode of seeking to avoid the constitutional restrictions that lie on this General Conference. I maintain that this confessional restrictions shall recommend such measure. Has that been done in this case? The question at this point is not whether the drinking of ardent spirits be right or wrong; but whether this conference has authority to make this test of membership?

Again; the brother supposes the use of ardent spirits is a great evil. And it is unquestionably so. All men of reflection have felt it to be so. But a great moral movement is abroad that has arrested the evil to a very great extent, and it has done so without any aid from the rules of Methodist Discipline or legislation. The ball of reformation has been struck: this wonderful movement has been felt throughout the land, and there is scarcely a single portion of our country that has not seen the redeeming and saving influence of the temperance cause. And yet it has never needed conference legislation, and does not need it now. But though a great evil, and that confessedly, yet a rule on this subject is not of the nature of our General Rules. Every rule that operates as a test of membership is a general rule, and this is not of the nature of a general rule, and ought not to be admitted into the Book of Discipline as one. The book defines the nature of those—"they are such as are clearly written by God's Spirit on every truly awakened heart," and I appeal to every calm and deliberate mind in this house, whether this rule is one that the Spirit of God has written on every truly awakened heart? If so, what is the fact with regard to our forefathers who laid the foundation of our spiritual edifice? Why, that they had it written on their hearts, and that they violated that conviction, for they indulged in the moderate use of ardent spirits, until the light of temperance reform opened their eyes to the imprudence of the thing. And yet these very men, many of whom the movers in this measure were glad to honour, were accustomed to the moderate use of ardent spirits, and, according to the doctrine upon which this measure proceeds, must have had it written upon their hearts that this was wrong, and if so, they were sinning against conviction and against the influence of the Holy Spirit. Every thinking man must allow that they were not sensible of any gross immorality, of any evil in the thing, and therefore this cannot come under the general rule as "written upon the mind of every truly awakened person by the Spirit of God," known without any induction or argument.

The speaker was here reminded that the fifteen minutes allowed to each speaker had expired, and a motion to extend the time was agreed to.

Mr. Collins asked the speaker, as a matter of courtesy, to yield the floor to him to offer a motion.

Dr. S. consented, and Mr. C. moved the postponement of the discussion until to-morrow—then to be the order of the day.

During a conversation on this,

Mr. Slicer got the floor, and said that in 1840 they were told that the rule as it stood was sufficient to try a man for the sale of ardent spirits; and if the views of the gentlemen remained the same, they would come up in firm phalanx together. Dr. Tomlinson, he maintained, reported against the annual conferences, and in spite of the quibbling (O! O! from Dr. Smith) of that report, if the view of Drs. Fisk and Winans was to be depended on, then the construction Dr. T. gave to the law was a wrong one. And in proof that Dr. T.'s report was not adopted by the General Conference, two-thirds of that body in 1840 voted to restore that rule, and the presiding bishop decided that the proposition was not carried, because, though two-thirds of those present voted for it, there were not two-thirds of the elected members present; and because of the lateness of the hour the friends of the question took no steps to appeal from the bishop's decision. In the Kentucky Conference the whole of the members, with one solitary exception, voted for the restoration of the rule, being seventy-nine for its restoration and one against it. This showed that Dr. T.'s report took no better there. The Methodists had not opened their eyes since the temperance movement only, but one hundred years ago. Mr. Wesley considered the wholesale dealers in ardent spirits as murderers. We had gone back. Mr. Wesley was the great pioneer of the temperance reform, and he suspected the loss of that rule from our Discipline would present a curious history, could it be known. What said Dr. Fisk?

A member called the attention of the chair to a point of order. The speaker was

discussing the main question, and quoting documents, when he only held the floor because Dr. Smith had in courtesy given it up for the proposal of a resolution.

Mr. Slicer said he was speaking to that resolution.

The chair thought the point of order could hardly be sustained.

The member thought it would be sufficient to call the speaker's attention to the informality of his proceeding.

Mr. Slicer continued. What said Dr. Fisk? (reading an extract from one of the writings of that lamented minister on the subject.) The argument of brother Smith goes to make this a matter of very trifling importance indeed. He wants the General Conference to let the matter work its own cure. Then why not let swearing and other species of wrong-doing be cured by moral suasion. Let moral suasion cure the moderate drinker, but let them have legal presumption to cure the drunkard maker. They abstained as tee-totalers, not because there was any moral harm in a glass of wine, but to use their influence in keeping men in the right way, and they had cleared the heads and steadied the steps of thousands. The whole traffic, from beginning to end, was an evil. It let loose a burning tide that consumed and dried up and withered every green thing. It was time they stood up to this matter, and, sustaining the reform, pushed out its results.

The speaker was reminded that his time had expired, and the conference declining to extend it, he sat down.

Mr. M'Ferrin said, some brethren were so full of speech-making, that they must relieve themselves at every turn. As to the long speech which Mr. Slicer had made, it was time wasted; they should have every item of it over again. The conference was not prepared for this question. Before voting upon it he should like to hear the reports from all the annual conferences, and from the committee on the great question of temperance. Then would be the time for action in the matter. The movers of this question could not force its conclusion upon them in fifteen minutes. Let them decide it like men, and like Christians.

Mr. Early, Dr. Luckey, Mr. Collins, &c., agreed in this, and it was finally laid on the table until the report of the Committee on Temperance should come up.

SATURDAY, MAY 18.

Report on Missions—German Missions.

Dr. Bangs called up the report in part of the Committee on Missions. The second resolution gave rise to considerable discussion.

Mr. Slicer saw difficulties in the question as to the lines or boundaries of the conferences, and he doubted whether the conference was ready for the question. If the committee could see their way clear of this difficulty he should be glad.

Dr. Bangs said the Committee on Boundaries would simply have to make an exception of the German missions.

Mr. Longstreet saw no reason for breaking up the boundaries for this object; or why for the German Church more than any other—the French, Spanish, or other foreigners? Members seemed to have got into a habit of supposing that, when a proposition was made, they must of necessity do something in the matter.

Mr. Cartwright inquired why the passage of this resolution was to be allowed to tangle their work? From the little light on the subject he had, it conflicted directly with their established regulations. The selection of a presiding elder was the province of the bishop, and this would straiten his operations, and throw his appointments into conflict. It would be like the heavens and the earth when they were first made. Darkness appears to me to be on the "face of it, and it is without form and void." It appeared to him that the thing would not work. They had succeeded admirably on the old plan. In that part of the work in which he was engaged they had a German mission, and he wished they had more. He thought this resolution would tangle their operations.

Mr. Spencer had had charge of some German missions for the last two years, and knew that some such measure as this was necessary in the work. The proposition was that they should have German mission districts, and he could not see how it would interfere with the boundaries. He did not see how they could get along unless they all belonged to one conference, and he really thought they needed some plan by which all the German missionaries could be appointed at one time.

Mr. Finley saw difficulties in this matter, but he thought there were greater difficulties under the present plan. The appointment of the missionaries to their

different fields of labour was a great difficulty. This had been experienced in the Episcopal Committee. It was well known that these missionaries had frequently to be changed from one conference to another. These conferences might be some distance from each other, and the bishop makes an appointment to fill up some mission, perhaps in Indiana Conference, before that conference can sit; and he must fill up the vacancy from the Ohio Conference. So there was considerable delay in the business. Now he (Mr. F.) saw no great difficulty in gathering these missions into one or two missionary districts where they could conveniently meet, and have their changes and appointments made, without the delay of a month or two. He hoped this proposition, emanating from the Missionary Committee, would prevail, as he believed it would relieve the bishops of many of their difficulties.

Bishop Soule desired to say, in regard to this matter, which was one of no ordinary importance, that he presumed every brother in the conference had read with care the reasons which the superintendents offer to the General Conference for forming a German missionary conference. He also presumed that several of the brethren had heard enumerated, in substance, the difficulties growing out of the present state of things, in regard to the German missions. He did not recollect that a single reason was offered for creating a German missionary conference which did not strictly apply in the present case.

Mr. Drake observed, that the committee who had this subject under consideration intended this as a plan for the German conference of the episcopacy. There were various opinions with reference to the formation of a German conference of this character. Some thought it would remove the German brethren too far from us. The suggestion was intended to meet the difficulties foreseen, and to preserve a union with the conference. One brother asked what objection could be urged against the German Union district. In the Mississippi Conference there is a German brother on trial. He had been converted but a short time, and was labouring successfully in New-Orleans; and though full of zeal, he was unacquainted with Methodism; and no brother was prepared to instruct him, from the fact that no one was sufficiently acquainted with the German language. It would be a great point gained if some brother could visit him quarterly, and examine him on theology, and report to the conference. This was not a solitary case; the same, doubtless, would apply to other conferences. Perhaps in a great majority of cases the same conferences would have the whole subject in charge irrespectively, and it might be necessary to place these two missions together. Though there might not be enough in this field of labour to occupy the presiding elder constantly, yet he might have his time fully occupied in seeking out other fields of labour. It was very important that aged and experienced German brethren should engage in various points in the work. The committee saw no other way than to have German districts formed, so as to have them regularly visited by the presiding elders.

Mr. Kavanaugh thought that this should be done irrespectively of conference boundaries. In the very nature of the case it must be so, and the conference boundaries might stand clear and defined, and these districts would not interfere with them in any sense whatever. Already our German missions are spread over the same ground that our stations and circuits occupy. The alteration was intended to meet the convenience of the episcopacy—to enable them to meet the conference without interchanges from one to another conference, when held at a great distance of place and time from each other. And I think there is nothing in the subject of boundaries which should interfere with the question before us at all.

Dr. Luckey was in favour of having such a plan as could be agreed upon without conflicting with the established rules of the Church. He could not conceive that this act itself would neutralize what is understood by the adoption of conference lines. It was, however, a question purely of jurisdiction, and unless the resolutions, if adopted, be referred to the Committee on Boundaries, to be so modified in phraseology as not to conflict with the question of jurisdiction, it would lead to difficulties.

Mr. Kavanaugh wished to say, in explanation, that each mission should belong to the district, and be under the supervision of the conference to which the presiding elder was attached.

Dr. Luckey would say in regard to the remark of the brother, that the action of this conference would supersede the boundaries. The question of jurisdiction, with respect to preachers, is limited to the boundaries. The difficulty in the matter

was, that there were two equally authoritative resolutions which seem to conflict. He conceived that these might be reconciled if the subject were referred to the Committee on Boundaries, and the action of the General Conference be regulated by the report of that committee. He believed German missions were not deemed foreign missions. If a German missionary became superannuated his support would fall on the conference to which he belonged, and all the burden of supporting superannuated preachers, wives, widows, and orphans, would fall upon the individual conference.

Dr. Winans considered this a great question. He had come to this conclusion slowly and intelligibly. The report of the committee on this point was of vast importance, and deserved the serious attention of the General Conference. They did not wish an act performed which should contravene the action of the General Conference on the report of the Committee on Boundaries. The Committee on Boundaries must conform their report to the action of the General Conference, or the General Conference will do it for them when their report comes in. That this measure is important (said Dr. W.) will appear from a simple statement of facts. I have in the district over which you have placed me, a German mission, consisting of preachers and members, who are able to understand but very few words of the English language. I proceed in the exercises of the conference. They do not understand me nor I them. How are we to co-operate in the management of important business? I am expected to administer the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Preachers associated with me around the altar, members who come to partake of the holy sacrament, under my administration, do not understand the language in which the service is performed. Other reasons have been given why the German mission should be under the direction and control of those who understand the language, and are informed with regard to Methodism. We need an arrangement of this kind, and must have it, or the cause of German missions will suffer greatly. The brethren from Ohio and Indiana call for this position, where circumstances are more favourable. Why, then, is it not needed in places which are less favourable? Sir, I do hope that the bishops will be authorized to appoint the districts and presiding elders, as called for by the report.

Mr. Green remarked that there would be another advantage growing out of the organization of districts which had not been mentioned. Young men newly converted, and just about to preach, are employed as missionaries; they are not of age. They wanted ordained men to visit the missions and administer the ordinances—those who understood the German language. For want of this they would compel the conference to ordain young men before they had served out their term of probation. It is certainly important to the German missions to have German presiding elders as well as German missionaries.

The resolution was again read, and adopted.

Dr. Bangs called for the reading of a communication from Mr. Nast. He doubted whether the conference could duly appreciate the resolution, or estimate the motives which led the committee to propose it, without hearing that communication.

Mr. J. T. Peck was opposed to the reading of this communication. It was very long, and the substance of the whole matter was the various reasons why Mr. Nast should go to Germany.

Mr. Collins observed, that the document was put into his hands as the secretary of the committee, and was not with him at the time; he could soon procure it, however. Brother Nast came to this country a German rationalist. He had since been converted to God, and had become a successful minister of Jesus Christ. His labours had been greatly blessed. Considerable influence had already been exerted in Germany by his publications, and other means. This visit ought, therefore, to be held as a most auspicious event. To send such a brother to speak to his own countrymen, in his own land, in his native tongue, could not fail to have a most powerful influence there. He also intended to translate several of our publications, and give them a circulation in Germany. He (the speaker) would look upon it with peculiar pleasure, should the Methodist Episcopal Church send to that country an evangelical man to kindle once more the fires of evangelical piety and vital godliness in the land of the immortal Luther. It would doubtless have an important reflex influence upon this country.

Bishop Soule presumed that a good deal more time had been spent in discussing the question whether the communication should be read, than would be required for reading it.

Mr. Green was sorry to see so much opposition to the reading. Dr. Elliott believed much time would be saved by reading it, as he intended to speak longer than the time required to procure it, if it were not read. The resolution to read was adopted, and the consideration of the report was suspended until the document could be obtained.

When Mr. Collins returned with Mr. Nast's communication, it was read by the secretary.

It stated, as reasons on which Mr. Nast grounded his expectations of usefulness in his own country, that a work had recently been published in Germany ridiculing the Methodists; yet acknowledging that if some measures were not taken for their suppression, they would soon overrun the whole country. This work had attracted a great deal of notice in Germany, and a good reply to it would be of immense service, and was imperatively called for. Such a reply Mr. Nast proposed to publish in the German language, embodying Rev. Dr. Dixon's Sermon on the Origin, Position, &c., of Methodism; the Rev. Dr. Jackson's (late editor of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, &c., England) Letter to Dr. Pusey, with other kindred works, which he felt assured would meet with a large sale, attract great attention, and operate as an antidote to the work referred to.

The communication further spoke of the reverend gentleman's having translated into the German language, with such alterations as the customs of the country rendered expedient, several valuable evangelical works of American and English Methodist authors. He proposed a visit to his native land in his editorial capacity, in which he contemplated a great sphere of usefulness to his countrymen, in opposing the pernicious doctrines of rationalism, in combating the encroachments of Popish and Jesuitical doctrines, and in opening a friendly intercourse and correspondence with the leading influential minds among the evangelical portions of that interesting community, through the means of his own personal relatives and friends.

The remainder of the communication, which was of a modest and becoming character, had reference to the private arrangements necessary for the proposed visit.

Mr. Sehon said, if he thought the report was not going to be adopted, he should feel a desire to say something on the subject; and even though it should be adopted, he wished to offer a few observations on the subject, and that as the result of the conversations he had held with brother Nast, and from the regard and friendship which an intimate acquaintance with him had awakened toward him. From such considerations he would second the motion for its adoption, and urge the granting of the request of the petition which had been so unanimously recommended by the Committee on Missions. He was disposed to look on the German mission as, at least, one of the most important missions ever established in the world. Whether they looked at the subject in a political or religious view, this conviction would be increased. In the city of New-York there were between forty and fifty thousand resident Germans. In Cincinnati there were fifteen thousand, and in St. Louis and New-Orleans in proportion. The strongest efforts of a foreign jesuitical power—he (Mr. S.) spoke advisedly and understandingly when he made the assertion—were being directed to the establishment of a Church among this people; and this afforded abundant reason for their doing all in their power to forward this enterprise.

And courtesy, kindness, and friendship—points which he acknowledged were not pleaded in the letter, and which should not, alone and unsupported, govern this assembly, but which, in connection with the facts, might here be very properly introduced—ought to induce them to grant this request. Brother Nast had laboured ten years among them, a stranger from his home and his country. He had come here an infidel, and had been converted by the power of God, and the saving truth of the Gospel. He came and offered his services to the Ohio Conference when they had not a single German missionary. That conference sent him out with his Bible and saddle-bags, a Methodist preacher's portion, and he came back and brought them forty converts! From that time to this the number has increased, until now they have three thousand members, and the stately tree was spreading its branches on every hand. And now he asked as a favour that he might visit the land of his fathers, in the firm hope and belief that he could be useful there, through the instrumentality of his friends, who were among the most respectable and influential in the German confederacy, his own heart being impressed with a strong desire to bear testimony among his brethren to the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Without further detaining them, he hoped they

would grant the request of this amiable, learned, and Christian man, and let their best wishes and prayers go with him.

Dr. Capers saw but the one difficulty he had already named, and which was still present to his mind. Mr. Nast's visit to Germany seemed to him very desirable. He supposed the expense would be about \$500, besides \$300 to the missionary who might supply his place; and they could, rather than their brother should not undertake this important mission, raise it by subscription.

Mr. Hamline said there were some points of resemblance between the present application and Mr. Asbury's first visit to this country, though in some points the parallel did not hold. The object of brother Nast was different, &c.

Dr. Durbin said, I intend to vote for the resolution for several reasons already assigned, but mainly for a reason that has so far been only briefly suggested. It was my good fortune, in the fall of 1842, to visit Germany, and to spend some time in Berlin, but above all a little time at Halle, with Dr. Tholuck, the friend of Dr. Hengstenberg, who conjointly publish the most evangelical journal in Germany. I satisfied myself, by repeated conversations with good and true men in that country, that there is a rapidly-returning spirit of religion among all the Lutheran and Calvinian churches in Germany, (and especially in Prussia,) and also an increase of sound religious literature and of truly converted men, while the rationalism of the last forty years is giving way. And the object I have in view is to establish a communication between that evangelical party and the M. E. Church of the United States, and especially that part which we call our German mission. And I am well satisfied that the influence of Mr. Nast's visit to Germany will increase the circulation of the "Apologist," so as to cover all his expenses. In addition to that, it would open a correspondence with such men as Drs. Tholuck and Hengstenberg and their associates, whose inquiries respecting America were eager and numerous. They want to know more about us than any other part of the world. The publication of Dr. Baird's book on religion will increase that disposition, so that, when brother Nast returns, he will have established a correspondence with those who, as contributors, will make the "Apologist" an invaluable paper. I, therefore, present these views as inducements to brother Nast's visit to Germany.

Allow me to add, that by some means, and I think wisely, the evangelical party in Germany, in all the churches, meet on one common platform, and are of one heart, and mind, and feeling, with what they understand to be the truly religious people of America, and would establish an intercommunication between the "Apologist," and papers in Germany, which would keep us well informed of the progress of religion there. This would be a great barrier to the rising floods of Popery that are now returning over Europe. To show you, sir, for a moment the interest taken in this matter by the friends of evangelical piety, I will just state, that, on arriving in Halle in the afternoon, I sent a note to Dr. Tholuck, requesting an interview. In reply, he said, that at 4 o'clock he was accustomed to walk in the meadows near the city, where he asked me to join him. I did so, and spent two hours in listening to the warm, fervid, faithful, and powerful exhibition of that great and good man of the reviving state of religion in Germany. "Sir," said he, "when I came here I could not find ten evangelical ministers. Two weeks ago we had a small conference, and there were one hundred present." Now, sir, I wish to establish a permanent communication with this party in Germany, such as will direct the German when he leaves his native home—and they leave their homes there by villages—not being able to enjoy their liberty, they strike their tents by villages, and seek refuge on our shores,—and the Apologist will be sent back to Germany, and the correspondence will be kept up; so that, when the German lands here, he will think of Cincinnati, and the "Apologist" will be a light to his steps, to guide him to a home. And as the circulation of the paper will be thus increased, I think the expenses of brother Nast's visit ought to be charged to the editorial department, and any deficiency made up by the Book Concern.

After considerable further discussion, the resolution was adopted; and as Mr. Nast's visit was of an editorial character, and had for its object the opening up of new channels of correspondence for the publications of the connection—for the conference, alike unwilling to act in defiance of the law of the German nation, or to appear to trench upon the mission ground of their English Wesleyan brethren, would not send him as a missionary—it was finally resolved that the Cincinnati Book Concern should defray the expenses of the visit, as well as of brother Nast's supply during his absence.

Mr. Billings offered the following resolution:—

On granting Books to Colleges and Seminaries.

Mr. Billings offered the following resolution:—

"That the book agents at New-York be, and they are hereby authorized to give to each college and seminary under our control a copy of every book published at our Book Room."

A member stated that the committee had a resolution from the Ohio Wesleyan University, asking for a copy of all our books for that institution. The same request had also been made in behalf of all the editorial departments of our Church.

Mr. Winner moved an amendment that we add "every regular itinerant Methodist preacher also."

A motion to lay the amendment on the table was lost.

Mr. Winner believed that the preachers had as good a right to those books as colleges. If any good reason could be shown why our institutions of learning should receive the gratuity provided for in the resolution, equally good and even far better reasons could be given why every itinerant Methodist minister should enjoy and receive the same benefit. He was fully convinced of the entire righteousness and truth of this sentiment, and could not but suppose that it would receive a hearty response from the majority of the conference, let the question meet them in whatever light it might, while the principle was retained. A motion of this kind was presented at the General Conference in the city of Baltimore, and whatever was the particular nature of it, it then prevailed. Some of our colleges were furnished with these books to a greater or less extent, and the circumstance had left a dissatisfaction on the minds of many men, well wishers to the seminaries and to the Book Concern. Did that conference refer to its institutions of learning for its parentage and rearing? Was it a child of those institutions, that as a child it should turn round and minister peculiarly and exclusively to them? No, those gray-headed itinerant ministers who had worn away their years in traversing mountains far and near were the originators of that enterprise. These books, in some sense, were theirs; and their consent could not be obtained to appropriate so immense an amount of books to those institutions gratuitously. They would insist that their necessities for these books were as great as the necessities of those institutions. They objected to this exclusiveness in the objects of their charities. He hoped, if the resolution prevailed, the amendment might be appended to it. Though he had no expectation of obtaining a book, he had a strong and fixed determination to oppose the resolution, as it originally stood, to the last.

Dr. Bangs remarked, that if he thought the whole subject would be laid on the table, he would be content to sit down and say nothing. He doubted very much whether the conference had the power to adopt the amendment, and he had similar doubts in respect to the original resolution. The object of the Book Concern was expressly stated when it was established. It was, first, to circulate sound knowledge and religious information; and 2dly, the profits arising therefrom to be appropriated to the support of widows and orphans. Let this resolution prevail, and see how it will affect your funds. Now there are about four thousand travelling preachers. If the Book Concern were to give a copy of every one of their publications to each of these preachers it would soon eat up the Concern. Are we at liberty to take these hundreds of thousands out of the hands of the suffering poor, and appropriate the amount to ourselves? He hoped not. With this doubt he would be compelled, however reluctantly, to vote against the amendment and resolution. He trusted we should never be selfish enough to put our hands to that fund, and appropriate it to our individual purposes.

Mr. Early said the object of the *rider* was to run the horse down. On the same principle members of Congress had introduced not only knives, pens, paper, &c., but guns, and whatever they thought proper. It was first proposed that the stationary should be provided for; and under that provision they procured whatever they pleased. Were this General Conference to pass this resolution, when its members get home, and are called to account, what answer can they give? As to the right of the General Conference to furnish the colleges with a copy of each work, according to the explanation of Dr. Bangs, the speaker had no doubt. If the design is to impart knowledge, where, he asked, can that knowledge be more happily imparted than in our literary institutions, made up not only of young men from our own persuasion, but of those who would never see our books, except in our institutions. He begged to be understood, that he voted against the *rider*.

On motion the amendment and resolution were laid on the table.

Sabbath Schools and Voluntary Associations.

Dr. Simpson offered the following resolution:—

"Resolved, That the committee on sabbath schools be instructed to inquire as to the expediency of this conference electing a board of directors to superintend the general interests of sabbath schools in our Church: and that the committee further consider the propriety of withdrawing from all connection with voluntary associations on this subject."

Mr. Sandford opposed the resolution. There was at present a Sunday-School Union organized by this General Conference, having a constitution which this conference had approved. If this General Conference was dissatisfied with the organization of the General Union, he believed they might very properly take measures to separate it from the General Conference of the M. E. Church. But while this conference recognized the existence of such an association, it appeared to him very improper to take into consideration the propriety of organizing another, separate from that which already existed. He could not therefore vote for such a resolution: if any thing was to be done, they must commence by undoing what they had done already; when they had done this, they might form another organization if it suited them better.

Dr. Simpson observed, that the very object he had in view was to take into consideration the propriety of withdrawing from the Union.

Dr. Bangs agreed in a very material point with his brother from New-York. There was a very great mistake in regard to this idea of voluntary association. Three or four, or more or less individuals combined in the hope of doing good. They formed their plans and presented them to the General Conference, who, approving of those plans, authorize and adopt them. Was not that a Church institution to all intents and purposes? What was the Church? Was it not a voluntary association altogether? What were our societies in this country but voluntary associations? There was no compulsion. They were raised up under missionaries, and increased and enlarged until they became Churches. In the same point of light he looked on the missionary societies. They had been recognized by the General Conference, and their principles of action had been adopted and approved of. One of them had been in existence for twenty-five years, and are we now to rise up and say we will cast them off and repudiate them merely because they originated in voluntary associations? Or is it the design to cast off the lay brethren? Is this the object? and can we live or stir without them? Ought it not to be the object of the conference to accomplish as much as it can by the laity? This Sunday-School Union originated a number of years ago. Four years ago it was reorganized, and presented its constitution to the General Conference. The General Conference examined, approved, and adopted it. And shall we, at this day, even insinuate that their movements are offensive to us? He trusted not; every good institution existing on the face of the earth originated in voluntary associations, and no good institutions can exist without them.

The resolution was referred to the appropriate committee, and the conference adjourned.

MONDAY, MAY 20.

Mr. Collins' Resolution on the Case of Bishop Andrew.

Mr. Collins presented the following preamble and resolution:—

"Whereas, it is currently reported and generally understood, that one of the bishops of the M. E. Church has become connected with slavery; and whereas, it is due to the General Conference to have a proper understanding of the matter: therefore,

"Resolved, That the Committee on the Episcopacy be instructed to ascertain the facts in the case, and report the result of their investigation to this body to-morrow morning."

Bishop Hedding called the attention of the conference to a rule in their Discipline, requiring them to remember, in all their discussions, that the eye of God was upon them, and he hoped, at present especially, they would remember this.

Mr. Collins said, that at present he simply offered the resolution because this was a matter that met them at every turn, and interfered with the whole of their business. He approved, and, so far as in him lay, would act upon the observations of the chair, but would urge the immediate report of the committee.

Resolution agreed to.

Course of Study for Licentiates.

Report of Committee on a Course of Study for Licentiates was read. The first section provided that a course of study should be prepared for exhorters, and for their examination therein, before granting license to preach.

Mr. G. F. Pierce wished to know if it was to be left discretionary with, or obligatory upon, the annual conferences to prescribe the course of study for applicants for license.

Mr. Wiley moved an amendment that it be made obligatory upon the annual conferences to prescribe such course.

Dr. Pierce believed the design was undoubtedly a good one; but it would be so wholly impracticable in his portion of the country that the probabilities were entirely against its being carried out. He would have no objection if it should be made obligatory, but would object to cumbering the Discipline with rules and regulations which could not be carried out. The whole would terminate in a perfect farce, so far as the improvement of the ministry is concerned. He would move to lay the amendment on the table.

Mr. Wiley wished to speak to the main point. He apprehended that there were difficulties involved which had not been fully considered. The duties which belonged to the ministry should not be devolved upon exhorters. God had made an order in the Church, that he that is given to exhortation should exhort, and he that is given to ministering should wait on his ministry. These improvements, which were so necessary in the local ministry, might not be applicable to exhorters.

Mr. Martindale believed that the last speaker had misapprehended the subject.

Mr. Ferguson considered it the object of the report to put into the hands of those exhorters who apply for license, a course of study which should prepare them to go forth under circumstances that would neither dishonour themselves nor the Church.

Mr. Slicer saw objections to the proposal. As soon as this rule is incorporated in the Discipline an intimation would be held out to every exhorter that he was to become a preacher. The Scriptures held out no such intimation. Many had the idea that because a man had been exhorting two or three years, he must by that time be qualified to preach the Gospel. Many, he believed, had mistaken their call to preach, and had been licensed; but when licensed, they had hardly preached over a month. Further, the plan would be oppressingly hard on poor labouring men, who were calculated to be useful in their appropriate neighborhoods.

Mr. Martindale believed the brother out of order.

Mr. Slicer would show that he was speaking to the proposition explicitly. It would be oppressive to the individual to exact of him, before he was licensed, attention to a course of study, with the idea that in the process of time he was to be a preacher. There were many in the M. E. Church who understood the Bible, and made it the basis of their exhortations, who, if they were catechised with reference to their knowledge of its doctrines, would be confounded. If they were to be made travelling preachers, they should be put on a course of study when they enter the ministry. He believed the course about to be applied here would have excluded John Nelson, and a multitude of other honoured preachers. He hoped vital godliness would be adhered to, and if a man who worked all the week wished to exhort on the sabbath, let him do so, without demanding of him a preparatory course of study.

Dr. Bangs remarked, that the more he reflected on this subject, the more difficulties he saw. The plan, he believed, could not be adopted safely. He would therefore move that the whole subject be laid on the table.

Mr. J. T. Peck observed, that if Dr. Bangs would waive his motion, he wished to make a few observations. They ordinarily licensed persons to exhort before they licensed them to preach. If an exhorter is not subsequently licensed to preach, he would ask the brother who made the objection whether it would do him any injury to study a little in the mean time? Was there any danger that it would cool the ardour of his piety? The community would be favoured with a very large improvement if exhorters could devote more of their time to study. He could see no difficulty in requiring them, before being licensed, to have some intelligence which should indicate their capacity to preach. He would not hold up the reins to halt before we got in sight of the line. If intelligence were an antagonist principle to piety, then the objection would be sound; but if the contrary, then let them adhere to increased intelligence, while they also adhered to undiminished piety. The doctrine that "ignorance is the mother of devotion" belonged to another communion than the Metho-

dist. The time was coming when Methodist preachers would be held to a stricter accountability than they had hitherto been held. The foundations must be laid broader and deeper, and young men must learn to think and know before they assumed to tell other people what to do. If young men were injured by study, it would be by a new process and a new result.

Mr. Rogers felt interested in the success of exhorters: they should be qualified for the work to which they profess to be called, and for which they asked license at their hands. If they asked license for exhortation, and there was a course of study prescribed in order to a qualification for the work, did it follow necessarily that they were to be preachers? He did not so understand it; but in the event that they should finally apply for a license, would the qualification with which they were favoured by the course of study pointed out be against the application? They were not now prepared for the work to which they aspired. They might plough all the week, or do anything else, and be prepared for exhorters; but when they applied for license would the qualification enable them to preach when licensed?

Dr. Bangs fully appreciated and highly approved of the motives of the committee in respect to acquiring knowledge, but it appeared to him that the subject had not been thoroughly investigated. They had preachers and exhorters among the Indians, and the Africans, the slave population, and the free coloured population of our country, many of whom were scarcely able to read, and yet they preached among their own people to very great profit. If they adopted the proposed resolution they would cut off these exhorters, as local preachers, at any rate. Was this a wise course? He believed not. No provision had been made by which the annual conference was to prescribe this course. It appeared to him that the report had not been thoroughly digested, and he very much doubted whether they were at present prepared to adopt it, were it thoroughly digested and brought forward in a proper manner. He would therefore renew the motion to lay the whole subject on the table. The motion was lost.

Mr. Gere saw none of the objections which had been urged against the adoption of the report. If the exhorters did not give attention to reading and study in some good degree they would be kept back; if they should read, study, and make improvement, as they certainly ought to do, they were the very persons that ought to become preachers, if God should move upon their hearts and call them to the work. What further discussion of the subject was needed? If that General Conference could spend a whole week on the subject, to what result would they come other than had been suggested? He firmly believed, that every man was under a moral obligation to acquire all the useful knowledge possible.

Dr. Winans opposed the proposal, chiefly because it was anti-methodistical, contrary to the very spirit and genius of Methodism, from its foundation till now. Methodists, both in England and in this country, had been licensed to preach when they had not the qualifications now contemplated. He believed he should hazard very little in saying that three-fourths of those present in this General Conference were licensed in the very same way. He believed if the contemplated course had been in operation, several doctors of divinity in that conference would never have appeared before the public. He hoped they would keep their wooden shoes before them in memory of the past: that they would never forget the rock from which they were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence they were digged. Let every man enter the ministry whom God had called to preach, whether he could read or not, whether he had attended to a course of study or not.

Mr. Finley moved that the article under consideration be indefinitely postponed.

Mr. Power desired to make a few remarks.

Mr. Collins observed that a motion for an indefinite postponement throws the whole subject open to debate.

Mr. Power said that was the view which he should take of it. Admitting, as had previously been urged, that some conferences would have difficulty in carrying out the proposition, he believed they were very few; but was there any enterprise undertaken by the Church which was not attended at some time or other with more or less difficulty? Allusion had been made to old-fashioned Methodism. This was rather taking advantage of the subject. Those venerable brethren who laboured successfully, and had gone to their reward, were called to act under circumstances far different from ours. If in their modes of operation it was only necessary in the plainest manner and in the old-fashioned style to present the truths of the Bible and the cause of Jesus Christ, and their line of duty was so plain that their labours in this way had their desired effect, it was not the case now. Error had been modi-

fied and re-modified, and had transformed itself almost into an angel of light, and assumed so much of truth in those doctrines where vital godliness was concerned, that the mode of preaching employed in the days of John Wesley would not be applicable to the present circumstances. It required a man who not only knew his business, had a warm heart and a clear head, but who was also acquainted with the modifications of error, so as to draw the line of distinction. It had been said that this was an innovation upon old-fashioned Methodism. He believed that an individual who had not the power to acquire the knowledge which the conference prescribed, gave demonstration that God had not called him to the work of the ministry. If he had the capacity to fit himself for this high and holy office, and was mentally so indolent that he would not acquire the requisite knowledge, he forfeited the claim, and showed that God had no use for him in the work. Every brother admitted the necessity of something being done. This he considered the best thing that could be done by the General Conference. He hoped they would allow this to be tried, and if it did not work well in four years they would have the light of experience to improve it.

Mr. Griffith would say a few words, though he had been superseded in part by Dr. Winans. One particular point appeared to have been entirely overlooked by the brethren. If they were about to establish a literary and theological test as indispensable to admission into the ministry at all, let them go to the work like men, and lay the foundation broad and deep, and determine that hereafter no man should be permitted to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church till he had read so much Latin and Greek, and studied so much theology. This was revolutionizing from the foundation. But let them not depart from the ancient usages of the Church, or from the principles of the holy Gospel itself on this occasion. Receive men who presented themselves with clear proof that God had called them, and by a thorough training compel them to become well-instructed, able ministers. But let them not undertake to say that God called no man to preach who had not such a certain amount of knowledge. The great Head of the Church alone could call and qualify a man to preach, and all their business was to recognize his credentials and give credence to his testimony. When they had ascertained that God had called him, then let them catechise him and prune him, and make all they could of him.

Mr. Perkins said, that either the brethren had erred, or he had erred in understanding them. He believed each conference could adopt such rules in regard to the education of their preachers as would suit their respective situations.

Mr. Finley, after several unsuccessful attempts, gained the floor. He said he was glad he had got his bag at the hopper at last; it was not a large grist though, and would soon run through. He had been at a loss to ascertain on which side brethren stood. If they were for applying these resolutions to the case of local preachers and not to the case of exhorters, he would vote with them; but there were many exhorters who could not read, yet could exhort with the power of thunder and lightning, and through their exhortations he had seen sinners cut to the heart, fall on their knees, pray, and get converted. If preachers were not likely to be useful, the quarterly meeting conference would not renew their licenses. But he would be sorry to discourage exhorters from the good work they were called to do.

Mr. Cooper believed the examination of candidates should be more thorough and faithful. He doubted the expediency of prescribing the course, because it would affect the relations between the local and travelling preachers. Let the quarterly meeting conference prescribe the course and determine the qualifications.

Dr. Capers would, as much as any man, wish to improve the exhorters, but not at so great an expense as they must be put to by this resolution. A foundation principle, which he believed to have been a most valuable one in Methodism from the beginning, was proposed to be subverted in order that they might improve the exhorters. To require that a man should have passed through a prescribed course of study before he should be licensed to preach was a mischievous and truly unmethodistical principle.

Mr. Early was not prepared to say that he would oppose any plan that might be presented there to improve local preachers; but he should be opposed to any plan taking in exhorters, some of whom had been ten, or fifteen, or even twenty years in that capacity, and never contemplated a further step. If the committee would bring in such a plan as would meet the wants of local preachers, and elevate the standard of that body, he would go for it; but he declared there his

designed opposition to any change in, or addition to, the Discipline that was no really needed. He was alarmed at the load of proposed amendments to the Discipline that laid on the President's table. It was become a matter of general apprehension out of doors that there was in that conference a prevailing dissatisfaction with the existing Discipline. There never were so many propositions of this nature before. He was not opposed to improvement, but there was great danger in their present course. Men would soon be making objections to subscribing to our Discipline for more than four years, on the plea that it was changed every leap year. He implored his brethren, young and aged, to abide by the old landmarks, to preserve those distinctive features Providence had stamped upon Methodism, and let them go home with the confidence of the people in their legislation.

Dr. Bangs thought they had got all the light they should get, and were prepared to vote. He moved that it lie on the table, which was agreed to.

The section in reference to the course of study for local preachers was then taken up.

Mr. Martindale said that the committee proposed to leave the prescribing of the course to the annual conferences, believing that the quarterly conferences would not undertake the duty.

Dr. Capers objected, for the reason that this embraced the very point which he had before taken serious exceptions to. The question reduced itself to this, whether the Church was right or wrong in holding that a man might be called to preach, and licensed, without any further qualification than the book of Discipline required, "gifts, grace, and usefulness." The moment they received the license, then they were bound by the Discipline, to which they submitted, to study and labour after improvement. He moved an amendment, to the effect that this course of study and examination should not take place prior to their being licensed, but when they sought to renew their licenses, or were recommended to travel.

Dr. Peck said, that if they agreed in the principle, it had better be recommitted, in order to make the necessary alteration.

And its recommitment was moved, Dr. Capers withdrawing his amendment for that purpose.

After some remarks from Mr. Filmore in favour, it was recommitted.

Presiding Elders' term of Service.

Mr. Houghtaling moved to take up again the second report of the Committee on Revision.

A point in the report was the length of time a presiding elder should retain his office, and four years were proposed as the limit.

Mr. Wiley moved an indefinite postponement. He had no interest in the matter, but thought the bishops ought to have the entire disposal of it.

Dr. Capers said, the subject was one of great practical importance, though it might seem otherwise where the conferences were large, and the senior preachers numerous; but in many conferences the office was of vital importance, and difficult to fill. In such cases, just when the bishop had proved the value of a presiding elder, behold the term of his office expires, and the only man, perhaps, fit for the office could not be appointed. He thought there was a disposition prevalent to over-legislate. First, it attacked the quarterly, then the annual conferences, and now the doubt applied to the episcopacy, venerable, tried, faithful, holy, and just men, and imbued with the spirit of knowledge, and wisdom, and grace, as that conference knew them to be; and although they travelled over parts of the country where other members of that conference never dreamed of going, yet the doubt must now be raised whether they were able to judge in a matter that was so directly in their province. He (Dr. C.) begged to be allowed to confide in the episcopacy. They had hitherto done so, and not a whit beyond their merits. In this matter he had no delicacy, not being a presiding elder.

Mr. Early made some strong remarks on the subject. If they passed that resolution they were introducing the dangerous principle of rotation in office. He besought them to let the responsibility rest where it had worked so well; to wake up at the threshold of these innovations. The proposed tax on exhorters was comparatively a trifling matter, but this struck at the very foundation of their institutions. Let them come back to the old landmarks—to that beautiful house which Providence had raised for them before some of them were born, and which distinguished them from other denominations, and not attempt these extensive

Mr. Finley hoped he should never live to see the day when the principle involved in that resolution would be presented on the floor of the General Conference. It was not the old suspended resolution of 1824 and 1828, but it was a german-cousin to it, so precisely like it, that any man who had seen the other would know this one. Go to some of the western conferences, where there are but few men of age and experience, and tell your bishops they shall not place presiding elders over a district more than four years, and you take away from these men the power to do what ought to be done in justice to the Church and the work of God. He believed those men they had elected and set apart for this great work were perfectly competent to judge whom they could best confide in. He could not conceive how any man could superintend forty stations and circuits, and do his work as a presiding elder. In his vicinity their duties were exceedingly arduous.

A motion to lay the motion for indefinite postponement on the table was lost, and the President was putting the motion for indefinite postponement when the hour of conference expired.

TUESDAY, MAY 21.

Bishop Andrew's Case.

The Committee on Episcopacy, to whom was referred a resolution, submitted yesterday, instructing them to inquire whether any one of the superintendents is connected with slavery, presented their report on the subject.

The committee had ascertained, previous to the reference of the resolution, that Bishop Andrew was connected with slavery, and had obtained an interview with him on the subject; and having requested him to state the whole facts in the premises, they presented a written communication from him in relation to this matter, and asked leave to offer it as his statement and explanation of the case.

"To the Committee on Episcopacy.

"Dear Brethren,—In reply to your inquiry, I submit the following statement of all the facts bearing on my connection with slavery. Several years since an old lady, of Augusta, Georgia, bequeathed to me a mulatto girl, in trust that I should take care of her until she should be nineteen years of age; that *with her consent* I should then send her to Liberia; and that in case of her refusal, I should keep her, and make her as free as the laws of the state of Georgia would permit. When the time arrived, she refused to go to Liberia, and of her own choice remains *legally* my slave, although I derive no pecuniary advantage from her, she continuing to live in her own house on my lot; and has been and still is at perfect liberty to go to a free state at her pleasure; but the laws of the state will not permit her emancipation, nor admit such deed of emancipation to record, and she refuses to leave the state. In her case, therefore, I have been made a slaveholder legally, but not with my own consent.

"2dly. About five years since, the mother of my former wife left to her daughter, *not to me*, a negro boy; and as my wife died without a will more than two years since, by the laws of the state he becomes legally my property. In this case, as in the former, emancipation is impracticable in the state; but he shall be at liberty to leave the state whenever I shall be satisfied that he is prepared to provide for himself, or I can have sufficient security that he will be protected and provided for in the place to which he may go.

"3dly. In the month of January last I married my present wife, she being at the time possessed of slaves, inherited from her former husband's estate, and belonging to *her*. Shortly after my marriage, being unwilling to become their owner, regarding them as strictly hers, and the law not permitting their emancipation, I secured them to her by a deed of trust.

"It will be obvious to you, from the above statement of facts, that I have neither bought nor sold a slave; that in the only circumstances in which I am legally a slaveholder, emancipation is impracticable. As to the servants owned by my wife, I have no legal responsibility in the premises, nor could my wife emancipate them did she desire to do so. I have thus plainly stated all the facts in the case, and submit the statement for the consideration of the General Conference.

(Signed)

All which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed)

Yours respectfully,

JAMES O. ANDREW."

ROBERT PAINE.

Mr. Collins moved that the report be laid on the table, to be taken up to-morrow as the special order of the day. His reason for so moving was that a meeting of the northern delegates was to be held at four o'clock this afternoon. He wished any of the southern brethren to attend who might choose to do so.

Dr. Capers said this was not an announcement in order before that conference; he would, however, take the opportunity to announce that there would be a meeting of the southern delegates at three o'clock, in the lecture room of the Church.

In answer to an inquiry, it was stated that spectators would not be permitted to be present at those meetings.

A false Report in Relation to a Division of the Church corrected.

The chair would take that opportunity to read a paper which had been laid on the table. The following is the communication:

"To the President.

"Rev'd and Dear Sir,—A report has been in circulation for some days, which is thought to have a very unhappy effect on this conference. The report is, that a plan has been formed by northern members of the conference, to force the south into secession, and I have been given as authority for this statement. So far as I am concerned, the allegation is wholly and unqualifiedly untrue. I propose with your permission to contradict it, with a view to promote peace. Yours truly,

(Signed)

THOS. E. BOND."

Dr. Bond rose and spoke as follows:—This report reached me for the first time last night. I understood that it had been for some time generally circulated that there had been a plan formed by northern men to drive the south to a secession, and that in tracing this report I have been given as authority for it. Now, sir, I do solemnly declare that I have no knowledge of any such plan having been formed at any time—that I have never heard a man from the east, from the north, or from the west speak of the possibility of a secession but as of a great calamity—a calamity that ought to be averted by any sacrifice consistent with duty to God and the interests of the Church—I positively declare, that although I have necessarily heard in conversation the subject which so deeply concerns us all adverted to, yet I have never heard any man intimate that a secession would be advisable or proper, under any circumstances. There were two unworthy motives attributed for this plan, which I shall not mention, but which would be still more disreputable than the plan itself. I should be degraded in my own esteem, sir, if I did not believe that any man—any body of men—who should conceive the purpose of producing a secession, or separation, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, would place me among the last men to whom they would communicate that purpose or design. Most assuredly you should have heard it; no secrecy enjoined upon me would have prevented me from divulging such a treason, had I heard it. I have been too deeply concerned in this matter to conceive that such a design threatening the Church that I have so long loved and laboured to defend—that such a purpose should be communicated to me, and not be made known to the conference. O sir, if it shall please God to raise the cloud which now rests upon this ark, the day which has wrought out for us this deliverance will be a day of public jubilee, every returning anniversary will be a day of joy and thanksgiving in my family, and I shall be glad to tell of the great deliverance that God has wrought out for us, to my children and grandchildren. It is wholly impossible that I should have concealed such a design. I am done, brethren. I hope if any brother has been deceived by this report he will dismiss it. I am sure it is not true.

Mr. Schon felt it due to himself, and the section which he represented, to disclaim all connection whatever with such a report. An act of secession or division would be an act to be lamented in tears all the rest of their lives. He would endorse the sentiments of the venerable man who had preceded him. As a western man, connected at present with northern men in a non-slaveholding state, he had never heard of such a report.

Dr. Bangs obtained permission from the conference to make a few remarks. He had heard for the first time yesterday morning that a report had gone forth to the southern brethren, that a number of the northern brethren had avowed it as their design, before the General Conference commenced, to take measures to force Bishop Andrew to resign, and then to force the southern brethren to secede, with a view to seize on the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He heard the announcement.

with perfect astonishment, and immediately replied that he did not believe one single word of it. He could not believe it. He had heard that his own name had been mentioned in connection with this matter; and wished to declare, in the presence of God and of this conference, that he had never made such an announcement, nor did he believe that any northern man had ever made it.

Dr. Smith said that he was not personally implicated in the allusions that had been made. A friend of his had been assailed, and he claimed the right to defend him. He wished to disabuse the minds of the conference. The statement which had been made was not the one out of which the difficulty had grown. It was neither heard nor known that a formal or informal meeting had taken place previous to or since the convening of the General Conference. The point at issue was this: It had been stated over and over again, in terms that led to the conviction that it was the purpose of many in the conference to pursue measures which must necessarily result in a division, and that, in declaring their adhesion to these measures, he would say they had used language that justly entitled them to a disclaimer. That course they had adopted with Bishop Andrew, and it was of this that he and his southern friends justly complained.

Dr. Bond desired to say he had nothing to do with this position.

Bishop M'Kendree's Life.

Bishop Soule rose to make a remark. It may be expected, in view of the report of the committee with respect to the matter of Bishop M'Kendree's life, as that report alluded to me, that I should at this time make some statements, and give such information as I may have. I am ready to do it now if this shall be thought the proper time. It is well known that at the death of our venerable and beloved Bishop M'Kendree, it was found that in his will he had bequeathed to me personally and individually all his papers and manuscripts; leaving them to my individual disposal as I should judge best, connected with the counsel and advice of the Rev. Thomas L. Douglas, Bishop M'Kendree's personal friend and mine, and who, with the bishop, has since gone to his eternal reward. Consequently I am left, by virtue of that will, in the sole possession of Bishop M'Kendree's papers and manuscripts of every description. I have them in my possession. It will be recollected that at the General Conference, held in Cincinnati in 1836, I was requested by that body to preach a sermon on the death of Bishop M'Kendree. I did so, in compliance with the request, which, by order of the conference, was published. That discourse contained a brief memoir of the bishop, drawn up chiefly from these documents which I have had in my possession. After the delivery of that discourse I was requested by the General Conference to prepare a Life of Bishop M'Kendree, which I was disposed to do according to the best of my ability; and which I intended to do as soon as my circumstances and special regard to my official work as one of your general superintendents would admit of the leisure which would afford me time to accomplish this work; but I have not been able to meet the request of the General Conference; and the most that I can say with respect even to a preparation for accomplishing the work is, that I have passed through a vast mass of Bishop M'Kendree's papers, perhaps nearly the whole mass, and this embraces a very extensive and very important correspondence, as well as many other official documents. I have arranged these papers by dates and by circumstances, preparatory to the work of publishing Bishop M'Kendree's Life. But I have done little more than make such an arrangement in preparation for this work, and I have no hesitation in saying that I cannot write the Life of Bishop M'Kendree—connected as that life is with the history of Methodism, and the most important eras and events in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church—I cannot write the Life of Bishop M'Kendree in such a manner as I conceive that such a work should be written, without more time and more leisure from my official responsibilities, and the weighty duties in the relation I now sustain to the Church. It is known, I believe, to this body; that since the time at which I was requested to prepare this work, I have at least shared an equal part of labour and travel with my colleagues, and it is impossible for me, in the view that I take of the importance of such a work as the Life of Bishop M'Kendree, connected as I am with all those great and interesting matters and concerns of the Methodist Episcopal Church—I announce it as my firm persuasion that it is utterly impracticable for me to write such a Life while I am travelling around this continent. I cannot write it in steamboats; I cannot write it in stages; I cannot write it on shipboard.

I confess to you that were it not for my inability to perform the work, it would

afford me pleasure to make the attempt. It would bring before me many important and interesting occurrences in the history of the Church which all so much love, and to which I am so much attached. But I think the brethren who look abroad to such a vast field will perceive that it should be no ordinary, common-place publication. Now I believe I have submitted to you all that I know in regard to the work with which I was charged.

Addresses of the Delegates from the Canada Conference.

Dr. Luckey remarked that the brethren from the Canada Conference found it necessary soon to leave the city, and as they had not yet communicated to the General Conference the state of their work, he would move that the conference now hear the delegates from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada.

This motion being carried, Mr. Ryerson spoke in behalf of the conference which he represented. He felt no little embarrassment in appearing before so venerable, august, and intelligent an assemblage. The reference which the address of the delegates from the Canada Conference made to the prosperity of their Church would in a good degree supersede the necessity of making statements in regard to it. The speaker had the pleasure of attending the General Conference in Pittsburg in 1828, and also the General Conference of 1840, and had derived great benefit and encouragement from those visits. He felt deeply the importance of those great questions which engage the attention of this General Conference, and would most earnestly and devoutly pray and confidently hope that the Supreme Being, who controls all events, would so direct all its deliberations as to prevent dissensions, and render the union of its members indissoluble. He was happy to represent before that body a part of the great Wesleyan family, and to be recognized as a legitimate branch of that family, although, as was well known, they had been set off from the great Methodist household in Canada. The difference which existed between the conference he represented and the British Conference was entirely of a local character, and he believed that difference would soon be healed, and that an amicable relation would be established which would enable them to interchange labour. The religious prosperity of his district had been very considerable, as the address stated. Great efforts had been made to enforce scrupulously the rules of discipline. The finance department was in a prosperous state, and vigilantly attended to. The missionary work has also prospered. Their missionaries numbered twenty-three. No meetings were more highly relished among their people than missionary meetings. Great advantage had been derived from their connection with the British Conference, their way of doing things having been adopted. A very considerable number of Indians had been converted during the past year. The schools among the Indians were in prosperous operation. So harmonious was the action of the Church that one might pass from one end of the conference to the other and scarcely find a party. The conference had never stood higher in the view of the government, and also of the people, than at present. A feeling of confidence and affection had been entertained and manifested toward it. He would always revert to his own country with unabated affection, with increasing courage and confidence. He was received as a probationer twenty-four years ago, and had always felt himself to be a member of this great family. He felt called upon to say one thing with respect to Dr. Luckey. He could assure the conference that his visit was highly appreciated. He would close by imploring the divine blessing upon this conference, praying that God would multiply them, and bless them, and make them a hundred times more than they were.

Mr. Green, the other delegate from the Canada Conference, followed. After the statements which had been made by his colleague, he felt sure it was not necessary for him to trespass long upon the time of the conference; but he could not do justice to his own feelings if he did not say that it afforded him great pleasure to meet them on this occasion, and witness the dignity, unity, and zeal there manifested. He had long heard of the conference by the hearing of the ear, and he was thankful to the divine Master that his eyes could now see them. He felt a deep interest in the prosperity of that body. We can never forget, said he, that we are your children, and we are happy to call you our fathers: for though we are separated from you by the arbitrary line that separates the two great Christian nations to which we belong, we are not separated in heart, and we feel that your cause is our cause, your interest our interest, and your God our God. It is in our heart to live and die with you, for we are happy in your kindness. In the plenitude of your wisdom, you were pleased to consider us of age, and to allow us under the

circumstances to act for ourselves; yet I beg leave, in behalf of the Church I represent, to state that we have not considered the separation so much an act of choice, as of necessity—a thing to be endured, but not desired. There are some difficulties arising from party and sectarian feeling, but all the parties which have been created and are now operating in Canada, calling themselves Methodists, have not received their origin from us. They are mostly brought among us by the flood of emigration from the old world and the United States. There is a feeling of union cementing our hearts that is truly delightful, and that promises much for the great family. Canada is the youngest sister of the Wesleyan household, and yet I rejoice to know that you consider her a sister, and allow her a place in the household, and I trust we shall be able to go on and maintain that respect and affection which are asked for her. I respond to the sentiments of brother Ryerson, and I need not repeat them; I only pray that our common Lord, the God of our fathers, may pour that healthful Spirit upon our hearts that so greatly cheered the hearts of our fathers, and that we may go on in the great work, maintaining the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Dr. Luckey expressed his gratification at the privilege of visiting Canada. He found the vital principles of Methodism in vigorous operation there, and the discipline of the Church rigidly enforced. Their superannuated preachers, preachers' widows, and orphans, were supported in a manner highly creditable to them. The missions introduced into Canada by this conference were successful to a most gratifying extent. The discipline exercised both on the introduction of young men into the ministry, and over the labours of the whole body, was of a most judicious and salutary character. Their success showed the beneficial operation of the Methodist Episcopal economy, and places formerly barren and unfruitful were now bearing rich evidence that the word of God was rapidly advancing over that vast and interesting country.

Mr. Green made some further gratifying statements of their financial affairs, which he said might be much multiplied had there been necessity for it.

Presiding Elders' term of Service.

Dr. Peck moved that the report No. 2 of the Committee on Revival should be taken up.

Agreed to.

Dr. Peck said he would not occupy their attention long; but as there was much said yesterday on one side, and the committee had no fitting opportunity to say anything, the matter was left in a very dubious state. He did not feel inclined to make any particular opposition to the indefinite postponement of the subject. He had no particular interest in it beyond the fact of the committee having acted in the matter on the request of two annual conferences, who had sent up resolutions on the subject to this General Conference. The committee did not suppose that the change proposed in the report would affect the rights of the episcopacy, nor that it had any relation to the resolutions of 1820. Those resolutions related to the *making* of presiding elders, and the change of the report to the term of service. It was a fact within the observation of all, that there was a feeling existing in the Church accounting the everlasting round taken by some men upon two or three districts a grievance, and requiring redress, and that it was proper that this General Conference should make a rule in the matter. He presumed that the conference was aware that the office of presiding elder in several conferences is suffering material embarrassment for several reasons. There was an objection in the minds of many preachers to the long term of services they were allowed to sustain in this office. There were brethren who had held this office twelve, sixteen, and twenty-four years in succession, and impressions were made upon the minds of the people prejudicial to the prosperity of the work. On this simple statement of facts the committee had made their report, to give the brethren who feel the difficulty an opportunity of explaining their views on the subject. The committee had no special fondness for the report. The constant tendency, if possible, to remain in the same location, had also induced them to call the attention of the conference to the subject. If the evil could be remedied by any other means, or if they could be sure of a change of presiding elders, they would be content; but that something should be done was felt by many. With these remarks he would leave the report in the hands of the conference.

Mr. Winner said he felt much embarrassed in opening his lips at all upon this subject; not that he had anything to risk personally, but there were so

many brethren who did sustain an intimate connection with it, that he feared lest he should be unfortunate enough to say some words that might do harm where nothing of the kind was intended. Dr. Peck's remarks were appropriate, and sufficient of themselves; but one consideration induced him to speak, which was, that one of the resolutions praying for the change of Discipline, now under consideration, came from the conference which he in part represented here.

With regard then to the novelty urged as an objection to the proposed change, he contended that in principle there was nothing novel in it at all, the same thing in principle had been recommended by the Episcopal Committee in the General Conference held at Baltimore in 1840. And the bishops, who were then recommended to station no man in the larger cities over four years in succession, have ever since felt called upon to regard the advice. In this is seen the same principle as in the question now before the conference; that recommendation directed men to be stationed in a given way, and in no other way; also the Committee on Itinerancy, of the present General Conference, had advised the introduction of a rule or law upon the same subject, involving precisely the same principle. It has been further objected that it would trench upon the authority of the episcopacy. Why this, to some extent, had been done already; the reports of the committees he had just alluded to required of the bishops to dispose of men in a certain way, and therefore if the rule prayed for does infringe upon the powers of the episcopacy, it is nothing new in the world. Again, the office of presiding elder has been stated to be analogous to that of bishop,—that was, he supposed, once a bishop always a bishop—once a presiding elder always a presiding elder. Was that the doctrine the member from Virginia intended to inculcate, and thereby show that the friends of this measure were preparing the way next to invade the office of the episcopacy?

Mr. Early denied that he had expressed such an opinion.

Mr. Winner replied, if there was an error on his part, it was one of the tongue, not of the heart; the conference would not fail to remember what the gentleman's remarks were; his words might have been missed, but not his sentiment. Certainly there was no analogy between the two offices, the one was a perpetual appointment during life and good conduct, the other a perpetual annual appointment, made once a year, yet endless; and who does not see the wide difference between the two? It had been further urged as an objection, that this measure would be the introduction of the doctrine of rotation in office, and that ought to be avoided. What objection the member from Virginia could have to that, as an American citizen or an American ecclesiastic, was not for him to guess, but he did guess it would not spoil their happiness or endanger their safety if they made a creditable effort to free themselves from this evil, and equalize the joys and griefs of itinerancy. Rotation in office would never harm them more than an aristocracy of office, especially if directed by the wisdom of the episcopacy. Brethren's fears that they should come in contact with the bishops, and thus mar and maculate the great enterprise in which they are engaged, were fallacious. Why, sir, (said Mr. W.,) the *General Conference* is the supreme power of the Church, not the episcopacy! Talk of power, and of bishops! Do they remain in office for the sake of its brief authority? Contemptible idea! They neither want, nor will they have, power which may not, in their godly wisdom, conduce to the best interests of the Church, and be promotive of the largest happiness of the ministry; and this body has the right to decide what power shall be intrusted in their hands for these purposes. In the creation, and proper use of power, right is right, as in everything else, and let justice be done if the heavens fall. In the name of the commonwealth of Israel, Mr. President, we are tired of this presiding elder passion for retaining, for holding on to office; the application of a remedy is called for by ten thousand voices in and out of the ministry. We expected brethren would meet us with objections; aged brethren, who have stood in office for years—ay, a score of them, perhaps. We expected to be met just as we have been met. Their rod is felt; we love them still, but still cry, Reform. I expect more of it when I sit down; but I shall not omit to thicken my skin in time for it.

A member called the speaker to order. The question was not between the present presiding elders and those who wished to become so, but on postponement. Some desultory remarks followed.

Mr. Winner inquired of the chair whether it was to be understood that he was

out of order? The bishop good-humouredly replied, Not more than others. The speaker thanked the chair, and adding he was glad to be in so good company, proceeded: I am not over anxious that the term of office of presiding elder should be fixed at four years—eight would give satisfaction. As the case now stands, there is certainly a problem of no easy solution involved in the matter. Those who are not presiding elders, and never expect to be, are often told that the office is a very thankless, laborious, onerous, and even dollarless office. And I wonder why, if such is the case, those who hold the office cling to it with so strong and unyielding a grasp, and retain it for twenty, or more, years in succession. What is the authority for the creed that teaches, if these gentlemen are not at the helm, the ship will be wrecked? We are placed severally in the itinerant ranks to occupy, not monopolize, its special posts. I suspect, pretensions to the contrary notwithstanding, that there is honey in their cup after all. I am quite willing to yield them the respect and honour due to them; but I would also aver that I do not believe in the system—I never expect to believe in it, and I never intend to. The reasons, then, Mr. President, offered against the change limiting the term of office in the presiding eldership, to my mind are destitute of force; and as the conference has been pleased for so long a time to give me its special attention, I only add, that I entertain a hope that hereafter the hearts and eyes of brethren will be saved from further grief and tears, by raising the blockade that keeps them ever in this burdensome office.

Dr. Winans said he desired to speak, not exactly on the principle of rotation in office, but because he thought this a very grave matter, one of deep and abiding interest to Methodism, and that was the only principle on which he could justify his action on any given case. And he would throw out of the question any other consideration but what should be for the glory of God and the good of the cause. He thought that it was exceedingly discourteous, and it was a course he never allowed himself to indulge in, to meet a report which had been under deliberation and consideration, probably for days, with prompt rejection. The report of a committee ought to be considered deliberately and calmly, and not hurried to its destination by a movement that was hardly courteous toward any motion made by a member of that body. He was not disposed to support the indefinite postponement of, but he was opposed to the passage of, this resolution of the committee. He was not disposed to notice the insinuations that had abounded during this discussion, that the report was opposed from interested views. He would not meddle with that sort of argument; it did not suit his genius. He would prefer to meet the question on its own proper merits—the operation it would have on the great work committed to the superintendents of Methodism. Sir, (continued Dr. W.,) there is no necessity for this restriction. You are not under obligation to continue a man in office for more than one year. You can even remove him during the year. Or you need not appoint him a second year; and when a man has fulfilled his four years, there is no obligation on you to retain him in the presiding eldership beyond that term. The only justification, sir, that they can plead for the passage of this resolution is, that you desire to be relieved from the responsibility. But we do not wish to relieve you. For this purpose you were elected, to shoulder this responsibility. The responsibility must rest somewhere; for it may be necessary, in carrying on the great work to which we are pledged, that a man must remain more than four years in this office. You, sir, have found this to be necessary at various times. And, to relieve you from a responsibility, shall we cripple your power, and curtail those operations that may work for the glory of God and the salvation of deathless souls? Much as I sympathize with you in your sorrows and cares, I shall not consent to that. You are restricted within sufficiently narrow and local limits already. The rest should be left to your discretion, remembering the fearful responsibility under which you rest, and God forbid you should ever be deprived of it. Sir, fearful consequences would follow from any such relief or divestment. Why there have been conferences, to my own knowledge, in which it was *necessary* to continue the presiding elder in his office for more than four years at a time. How it may be with those conferences which have multiplied their preachers in an enormous disproportion to their members, I know not; but in those conferences where young men have, almost from their first entrance into the ministry, to take charge of societies, you must have the untrammelled control of the great machinery committed to your care.

Mr. Cartwright said, I declare that I rise under great embarrassment, because there is such an everlasting disposition to let off here; and I am, for an old man, a little diffident in this matter, and that diffidence is increased because I feel I am

Mr. Griffith, of the Baltimore Conference, rose and said,—I beg leave to present a resolution and suitable preamble in reference to the subject now pending before the conference, and made the order of the day.

The secretary then read the following preamble and resolution:—

“Whereas, the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has become a slaveholder, and whereas it has been, from the origin of said Church, a settled policy and the invariable usage to elect no person to the office of bishop who was embarrassed with this ‘great evil,’ as under such circumstances it would be impossible for a bishop to exercise the functions and perform the duties assigned to a general superintendent with acceptance in that large portion of his charge in which slavery does not exist; and whereas Bishop Andrew was himself nominated by our brethren of the slaveholding states, and elected by the General Conference of 1832, as a candidate who, though living in the midst of a slaveholding population, was nevertheless free from all personal connection with slavery; and whereas, this is, of all periods in our history as a Church, the one least favourable to such an innovation upon the practice and usage of Methodism as confiding a part of the itinerant general superintendency to a slaveholder; therefore, “Resolved. That the Rev. James O. Andrew be, and he is hereby affectionately requested to resign his office as one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

ALFRED GRIFFITH,
JOHN DAVIS.”

Mr. Griffith proceeded:—In offering that resolution, sir, in calling attention to the merits of this question, I will endeavour, by the help of God, to avoid all expressions and all exhibition of feeling which shall in the least degree be calculated to influence men's passions. I wish to approach it with the calm deliberation with which I have ever desired to approach the altar of God. To the Methodist Church, under God, I owe all that I am. I entered the itinerant ranks an inexperienced boy. I have spent the vigour of my youth, and perhaps the prime of my riper years in earnest, honest, hearty endeavours to promote its best interests; with what effect, is for others to judge, and not for me. We have never known until this period such a state of affairs. There never has come up such a crisis in our history. I pray God that we may have grace and wisdom to meet it, and to meet it in the spirit inspired by our holy Christianity. It would seem to me, sir, that the imaginations of men have thrown around this question a mysticism which has served to embarrass it in all their reflections upon it. The very term bishop, and the abuses to which it has been subject from the assumptions of authority and power which have been associated with it, through the long period of the history of the Church from the third century of the Christian era, seem to be well calculated to throw around the very term itself a cloud of mystical glory upon which men should look with awe, and behind which they should only dare to peep with something less than adoration. Now, sir, whatever may have been the acceptance of this term in the Church where it was first used, as a term synonymous with power and authority, and an exaltation far above the rank of ordinary men, what is the sense in which the word has been incorporated into our institutions? What is the true signification, as a Methodist phrase, so to speak? Whatever men have meant by it—whatever other men still mean by it—we use it only and exclusively to denote and designate the chief officer of the General Conference, the chief officer of the associated annual conferences of this union, who have the primary authority—the primary control of the destinies of this great, this flourishing, and this growing house of God. A bishop among us is, therefore, only an officer of the General Conference, created for specific purposes, and for no other than the purposes specified. If we look at the origin of its introduction we shall clearly perceive this to be the case. The venerable John Wesley, who was never able to disabuse his own gigantic mind of his educational prejudices, perhaps to the day of his death, thought to serve the American Churches with a high officer in virtue of his own appointment. What said the venerable Asbury—that man of God to whom Methodism, on this continent, is more deeply indebted than to any other man who has ever lived, or perhaps ever will live? He declined to receive that office by the appointment of John Wesley. He refused to accept it unless the General Conference, then in session in the city of Baltimore, in 1784—the Christmas Conference—should elect him. It is matter of history which no man can call in question. He was elected by the General Conference, and constituted the

highest officer—the executive officer of the General Conference. From 1784 until 1808, all the annual conferences were in the habit of assembling together—in modern dialect perhaps it might be more appropriate to say, in general convention; though General Conference was the term. Every travelling elder who had been four calendar years in the work had a seat there. They met together in their wisdom—and doubtless great wisdom was displayed on that occasion—they thought proper to change the then constitution of things, and accommodate themselves to the circumstances of their situation. It had become inconvenient for them all to meet together, and they determined to create a delegated General Conference. They regulated the form and manner in which the General Conference should be constituted by the election of the several annual conferences in proportion to their respective numbers. The annual conferences then fixed this officer on the General Conference, or delegated General Conference, which they had instituted, and provided in one of the restrictive articles that this General Conference should not do away with that office. It is by their authority, therefore, that the office still continues, as well as with the common consent of all concerned, and we love the office. We love it not only for its own sake; many of us have been made to love it for the sake of the worthy men who have borne it, who have commended themselves to all as men of God, well qualified, and every way suited to the high trust which has been reposed in them; but the General Conference of 1808, at the same time that they restricted the delegated General Conference, and prohibited them from destroying this office, reserved in their own hands the power to do it away altogether when it should so please them. Consequently they never designed—they never intended to constitute the bishop an officer for life, under all circumstances. They never intended, we say, to constitute him an officer for life under all circumstances; but they reserved to themselves, as annual conferences, power even to change every feature of the system of government—to change everything pertaining to the character of the Church save the doctrines. That alone is absolutely prohibited. Well, now, we hope the brethren will not suffer their minds to be lead away from the true issue. What are we here consulting about? What are we here proposing to accomplish and effect? Is it, sir, to try a bishop on an impeachment for immoral conduct? No, sir. We are here concerned exclusively with an officer of the General Conference, and the question comes up whether this General Conference, to whom the annual conferences have given full power, not only to perpetuate their own existence, but to make all rules and regulations for the government of the Church, and to supervise and carry on the great object of the General Association for spreading Scriptural truth and holiness through these lands; whether the General Conference, constituted under such circumstances, has power to regulate her own officers—that is the question; and whether, when once she selects an officer, no change in his condition, no change in his situation, no embarrassment with which he may choose to involve himself, can be touched. No, sir; they have full authority to regulate their own officers, to provide for any exigency which may operate as a barrier in the way of the accomplishment of the objects and purposes for which the officers were chosen.

For the sake of argument let us suppose one or two cases, which might actually occur; say, in the order of God's Providence one of your high officers should become alienated in mind—a thing that might happen to any man—I say, suppose he was to become alienated in mind, disqualified for the discharge of the duties of his appointment, would it be an act of sacrilege in this General Conference to remove him—to displace him, and to put a proper officer in his place? Say that he involved himself in any embarrassment which rendered it equally impracticable for him to discharge with intelligence and with fidelity the functions of the office reposed in him, have we no discretion? Must we continue him for ever, so long as he is not chargeable with gross immorality? Now, sir, if the General Conference has no power over her own officers, then it will follow that these officers have power over the General Conference, and can control it.

Mr. Griffith's fifteen minutes having expired, a motion was made that the restriction as to time be taken off during the discussion of this question. Considerable discussion ensued.

Dr. Capers hoped the motion would not prevail.

Mr. Griffith did not wish to insist on being heard if the conference did not desire it.

Mr. Early begged that the brethren would hear the gentleman through. He would wish all to have the privilege of speaking who desired it. If any light could be shed on the subject, let the conference have it, and be governed by it.

Mr. Slicer observed that if the motion was carried the brethren might all write home that they would be home "on or about" the 4th of July.

Mr. Collins observed, that there could not be a greater or more important question before any body of ministers than that the conference were now engaged upon. He wished for all the light which could be gathered from a full and free discussion. He hoped the rights of the minority would be especially regarded. Suppose they did not get home till the 4th of July, that was a matter of little importance compared with this.

Mr. Slicer sincerely desired that the greater part of what might be said would come from the minority. As to getting light he did not expect it. The question had already been fully considered. He very much expected that if the conference should remain until the 4th of July, they would vote just about as they would then.

Dr. Olin said, the special issue before them was a matter of more importance than whether it consumed one or two days or weeks in the debate, and he should deplore it as a great evil, and a measure likely to act unfavourably on the great interests involved, to cut short the debates. He was aware that they were straitened for time, but the subject before them was one that *demanded* discussion. They were bound to go on the supposition that on this question no one was pledged or decided. They sat there to deliberate and decide on what might be said to be one of the most momentous questions that ever agitated the Church, and he wanted to hear a full and dispassionate exhibition of the views of brethren on the subject, given as in the sight of God, and with a deep sense of responsibility to the Church. He hoped that the restriction would be taken off, for it was misplaced and ill-timed in a case like the one before them. Some had said that they did not want to hear much said by the men of the north, but he (Dr. O.) would not like to give his vote without an opportunity of explaining the motives under which he gave it. There was a *future* pending upon this discussion, and he wanted to speak out freely and fully. Let them be patient and not in haste over this grave deliberation. He hoped they would take time to listen to each other, and take time also to think and pray over the subject. It would be quite time enough to come back to the fearful issue of the matter whether they debated it three days or three weeks.

Dr. Bangs certainly hoped that the restriction would be taken off.

Dr. Winans would insist upon being indulged in a remark with reference to an argument which had been presented in the discussion. It was suggested that there was no necessity for taking off the restriction because this was a judicial proceeding. It was not a judicial proceeding. He wished the conference and the spectators distinctly to understand that they were not trying Bishop Andrew.

Mr. Winner thought freedom of discussion would not be increased by the suspension of the rules, and that in case of need the time could be extended for the speaker.

The suspension of the rules was agreed to.

Mr. Griffith then resumed his remarks:—I have not much to say—I have but one point left. The point is this, that the ministerial office does not, and cannot necessarily involve the official relation of a bishop. I mean, it is one thing to be a minister; it is another and totally different thing to be a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is true this high officer must of necessity be a minister, because he cannot perform the functions of his office unless he be a minister, in view of the power of ordaining others conferred upon him, and the authority to superintend the spiritual and the temporal business of a great itinerant ministerial connection. He must be a minister; but yet, sir, his ministry—the power conferred upon him by his original ordination—does not necessarily constitute him that high officer of the General Conference. He comes to that by the free suffrages of his brethren. He is chosen as the chief among his equals. We have the signature of every one of our bishops to a document presented at this conference since our commencement; which says that they regard not themselves as a distinct order separate and apart from presbyters or elders in the Church of God by virtue of their ordination, but that they are officers in the strict and proper sense of the term. Now, sir, we will say, for the purpose of illustration, that no man save a man of talent, learning, and information, is a suitable individual to be sent as a minister plenipotentiary to a foreign court; but is his learning or talents part and parcel of his official qualification and power? No, sir; his official authority and power are conferred upon him by those who have intrusted him with the high duties of his appointment. We therefore do not touch the ministerial character of Bishop Andrew. That is not now in question before us at all; but the simple question is, can he, as an officer

of the General Conference, chosen for a special purpose, to whom special duties are assigned, can he now perform the duties of his appointment with acceptance to the people he was selected to serve? You know he cannot.

Now, sir, if an officer of your appointment, whom you have chosen for a special purpose, by a voluntary choice puts himself in the situation to embarrass himself with circumstances that render it impracticable for him to discharge the duties you have assigned him, is it not, to all intents and purposes, a disqualification, and sufficient ground to ask him at least to resign, and to give place to another who can go forward and discharge the duties of his appointment without interrupting the harmonious action of the appliances of Methodism for the conversion of the world? Now, sir, if we could—I speak for myself, and I speak in the honest sincerity of my heart—if I could believe—if I could be persuaded that the reverend brother, whom I esteem and love, could perform and fulfil the duties of his office with acceptability to the people, I am among the last men within the limits of the Methodist Episcopal Church that would attempt to lay hands on him. I have loved him; I love him now; I loved him in his office. Simply, therefore, because he has voluntarily placed himself in a situation that renders it impracticable for him to subserve the ends and purposes of his appointment, we affectionately request him to resign. I suppose, sir, it will not be pretended by any man, that the power of his office was conferred by his ordination. Not at all. Our authority to minister in God's sanctuary, and to preach and proclaim the holy Gospel, is conferred by ordination, and though our bishops are set apart in due form by the imposition of hands, it is not with the design of conferring upon them any additional ministerial power, but of conferring upon them the authority of office to preside in our conferences, to travel through all the length and breadth of the work, and to supervise and attend to the general interests of our great body.

I know not, Mr. President, that it is at all necessary further to detain the attention of the conference. It is to me a plain subject; and before I sit down, I solemnly conjure the brethren not to suffer their minds to turn away from the true issue, but to keep it steadily in view. We are oppressed by the act of an officer of this body. Are we not here to put ourselves right—to regulate matters by this discussion? The superintendent is made responsible here, and nowhere else. When the General Conference take a minister from the annual conference, by electing him a bishop, he is no longer responsible at the bar of his annual conference, but they make him responsible to the General Conference, not only for his official acts, but for his ministerial and moral purity. Of his moral character we do not now inquire. It comes not within the limits of the present inquiry at all. The question before us is solely in reference to his capability of complying with the requisitions of the book of Discipline in reference to the duties of a general superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. Longstreet then proposed an amendment to the preamble and resolutions, to which Mr. Griffith made objections.

Mr. Drake, in order to satisfy all parties, suggested that the preamble be altered so as to read, "Whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery, as stated in his communication," &c.

Mr. Griffith had no objections to the amendment, and as no one else objected, the chair announced it incorporated with the preamble and resolution.

Bishop Soule then addressed the conference, and said, I rise, sir, seeing no other speaker on the floor, and I assure you and the conference, strange as it may seem, with as perfect calmness of spirit as I ever remember to have possessed at any period of my life. I cannot, and I need not conceal from you, sir, or from this General Conference, that, since the commencement of this session, I have been the subject of deep mental distress and agony. But in this respect the season of my bitterness has passed away. Conscious that I have pursued, with close thought and prayer, such a course as was within my power to harmonize the brethren, and to strengthen, if possible, the peace and unity of this body and of the whole Church, I have calmly submitted the whole matter to the overruling and superintending Providence of Almighty God. I stand connected with this subject individually, and in connection with my colleagues, in a peculiar point of view, but I have at this period no personal interest whatever in the matter. I am, I assure you, willing, entirely willing, so far as I am myself concerned, to be immolated; but I can be immolated only on one altar, and that is the altar of the UNION of the Methodist Episcopal Church. You cannot, all the powers of earth cannot, immolate me upon

did not rise, with the indulgence of this body, this morning, even to touch the merits of the question now before this body. It would ill become me in the relation I sustain to this body and to the Methodist Episcopal Church to do it. But I have risen to suggest to the conference some considerations which I hope may have their influence upon the mode of conducting this weighty concern. I speak to men of God—to men of experience—to men who have analyzed the elements of human nature, and of ecclesiastical and civil polity—to men of thought, who have been accustomed to trace causes and their effects through all the diversified forms of human society. I speak to Christian men, and Christian ministers—I speak to young men, who have not had the same time as the aged, nor the same opportunities from experience and observation, to grasp fully these great and interesting subjects. I trust I shall hear on the floor of this conference the voice of age and of experience. And I beseech you, brethren, by the deepest interests that can affect our beloved Zion—I beseech you by a voice from the tomb of a Wesley and a beloved Asbury and from the sleeping places of our venerated fathers, to let your spirits on this occasion be perfectly calm and self-possessed, and perfectly deliberate. I advise in the place in which I stand that the younger men hear the voice of age. I beg you, brethren, to remember that you stand at this moment before several tribunals. You are before (I speak to the General Conference) a tribunal in the galleries; and whatever view you may take of this subject, if they cannot judge of the merits of the case before you, such are their enlightened ideas of what belongs to the spirit of Christianity, and the office of Christian ministers, that they will sit in judgment on you. I would also observe here, that, as a great branch of the Protestant Christian community, our position in regard to this subject is unique and distinguished from all other branches of that community. So far as I know, there is not a single sister (Protestant) Church in these United States, or in the world, having any legislation on the subject of slavery. I say in this we are unique, we are alone. We therefore stand in our action on this subject before the tribunal of all the Christian Churches of our own land, and our actions will certainly be judged of by that tribunal. We act here also in the capacity of a General Conference, and everything we do here is to go out before the whole body of ministers and people whom we here represent—it is to go out in the face of the whole Church, and they will judge with respect to our action in the premises. We are, too, before the tribunal of public opinion, and statesmen, civilians, and jurists, have an interest in this matter, and they will judge us on other grounds, and in reference to our standards, and rules of action, and not as we shall be judged by the great mass. They will judge by the rules of the "book," according as our action is founded on facts, and is in accordance with the rules of that book which contains the constitution and laws of the Church. This consideration will certainly occupy your minds on this question. I have only to add, and with this remark I shall take my seat, waiting results not without solicitude and anxiety,—not without the deepest concern for the perpetual union, and undivided interests of this great body; but calm, and perfectly undisturbed, waiting the issue, and committing all to God. A word about decorum, and the mode of conducting your debates. I myself love to hear hard arguments, but I love to hear them in soft words; and I believe that any man who has carefully weighed this matter will concede that arguments are proportionably stronger as they are conveyed in soft words. The effect of argument in debate certainly does not depend on the loudness with which we speak. It is not necessary to raise your voices so that you may be heard in the remotest parts of this house, and even in the street. Let me admonish brethren who may take part in this discussion that it is far from being important to their case that they should use great strength of voice, and where this is done an almost universal opinion is awakened that there is undue excitement of passion in the case. Avoid all reflection on each other. Meet brethren's arguments if you can. Confute those arguments if you can, but do it in a Christian spirit, and with a calm and undisturbed mind. Then whatever shall be the report concerning the General Conference, it shall at least be said that we have conducted ourselves with that calmness, and with that Christian and ministerial sobriety which becomes so grave an assembly, and so grave a question. I thank the conference for their indulgence while I have spoken.

Dr. Durbin said, he desired to contribute what he could to prevent difficulties arising in the discussion of this question, and with that purpose he would inquire whether Bishop Andrew admitted having been the legal owner of slaves.

The point was frankly conceded by the friends of the bishop, that he did by

marriage become legally the owner of slaves, until by deed of trust he reassigned them to his wife.

Mr. Sandford then addressed the conference. He said that he desired most ardently that there might be no unnecessary discussion on the resolution now before them. The matter seemed to him to be confined to one single point, viz., the expediency of making this request of Bishop Andrew. He presumed that no man would dispute their right to make the request, though they might differ as to the expediency of doing it. He (Mr. S.) thought it highly expedient. He would briefly glance at his reasons for this. In the majority of the conferences which compose our Church, if something be not done to remove the evil connected with the superintendence of Bishop Andrew out of the way, they could not possibly avoid convulsions, and the loss of very large numbers of members, and give opportunity to their enemies to exert a destructive influence within the ranks of their community. This was clear and certain, and did not admit of a single doubt; and this he believed to be the firm conviction on the mind of the conference. It was on this, and on this alone, that he wished to rest the expediency of the measure now proposed; and highly expedient as he thought it, and vast as were the consequences that hung upon it, he entered upon the measure with extreme reluctance: and though not so immediately connected with those who would be involved in the consequences of it as some others, yet he looked at it with strange feelings, and an ardent desire to prevent, as far as possible, evils that might be necessarily connected with the adoption of the measure. If he thought it possible, consistent with the established principles under which they had always existed, and with the great interests of the M. E. Church, he would most gladly waive the matter. To leave Bishop Andrew in the relation he at present stood toward them would be a matter of great rejoicing to his heart. But that was utterly impossible, without admitting a great evil into the Church, and he saw no other alternative than the one proposed. He wished it to be distinctly understood, that when he gave his feeble influence in promoting the measure now proposed, that it was with the full and unequivocal belief that it did not at all affect the ministerial character or standing of the bishop. All they proposed to do, and all that was necessary, was just to place him where they found him when they put him into the superintendency.

He accorded to the southern brethren, who lived in the midst of this great evil, all that he would accord to those who lived where it had no existence. He did not wish them to enjoy any smaller privileges than they now enjoyed because they were embarrassed with an evil like this; and he wished those brethren distinctly to understand, and he spoke the sentiments of the majority in that conference, that they did not wish at all to place any greater difficulties in their way, or to appear to undervalue their Christian and ministerial character, by the course which they felt themselves in this matter compelled to take. He could enlarge, but did not wish to occupy a single moment of their time more than was necessary, and he was in hopes that he might be made the instrument, by these observations, of saving the precious and invaluable time of the conference.

Dr. Winaus next addressed the conference. He said, I appreciate the remarks of our venerable superintendent, especially in regard to the manner in which this discussion should be conducted. There is one point, however, on which I must put in a disclaimer against the inference which the bishop's remarks would warrant. I cannot speak on any subject without speaking loud; and I beg to advertise this conference, and the spectators, that in speaking loud I give no indication of exasperated feeling. It is the misfortune of my constitution, and depends on no particular excitement on the question, and I approach this subject with as much calmness as I do any other. It may be, sir, that it is the calmness of despair, yet result it from what it may, I am calm, and perfectly so. That the conference has a right, an abstract right, with or without cause, to request any member of that body to retire from the episcopacy, I am not prepared to deny. I will readily admit, Mr. President, that if you, or any one of your venerable body, should be subject to that fearful misfortune, alienation of mind, it would be proper to obtain your consent to retire from your very important station, if indeed you might be competent to give your consent in such a case. I do not, then, dispute the abstract right of this conference to memorialize Bishop Andrew on the subject of his retiring from the office he sustains; nor do I conceive it to be out of the limits of that proper right for each member to assign the reasons for adopting a course so unusual. Conceding this right, I claim, on the other hand, a full and perfect

right for every member to assign the reasons why he should not join in this request. It is further the privilege of every member, closely to scrutinize, and rigidly to criticise the reasons assigned for this remarkable act, by those who move it. It will be my purpose to use hard arguments, but not hard terms, though I confess I find it difficult to avoid them. If, however, I do use hard terms, they shall not proceed from hard feelings.

I do not know, sir, whether I am to consider it at all necessary to notice the arguments that have been already presented in support of the request which is attempted to be made to the bishop. But I shall call your attention, and the attention of the conference, to the arguments in the preamble of the resolution inviting the bishop to retire. I say, then, that the first statement, the very first statement or proposition in the preamble is not true. I do not mean to say that those who placed it there intended to state an untruth. I believe they thought it was true when they made the statement; but according to my views of the matter it is not true that the settled and invariable usage of the M. E. Church has been not to elect a person having slaves to the office of a bishop. The mere fact that a thing has not been done, does not constitute usage. I admit that it is a fact that no slaveholder has been elected, and it would be true to affirm that it has been the invariable custom of the M. E. Church to choose for bishops those who were not slaveholders. It may be, sir, that slaveholders have never possessed an individual among them suitable for the office; or sectional matters may have influenced the vote. How are we to arrive at the fact, that the mere election of a man not a slaveholder proves the settled usage of not electing slaveholders? The term is improperly employed, and I could prove beyond question that this has not been the usage of the Church. I could take you back to the General Conference at Philadelphia, and show that it was in the purpose of the western and middle men to choose for the office of bishop a slaveholder, and in all probability he would have been elected to the office, had there not been management and interference on the part of the Baltimore Conference to defeat the design. The usage of the Church is not against the election of a slaveholder to the office of bishop. I will correct myself—I should say, such a bishop would have been elected, had it not been for the management and trickery, not of the Baltimore Conference, but of certain members of that conference.

2d. The next point is more palpably untrue than that I have just dismissed. It is not true in point of fact, though it has the show of truth. It goes on the principle that Bishop Andrew was elected to the office on southern nomination. That some southern brethren were concerned in his nomination is true, and we do not deny it. But that the southern party, the great southern sectional division of the M. E. Church, elected him, is not true, and it is well known not to be the fact. There was a report prevailing that some southern brethren were drawn into a conspiracy by which the rights of the south would have been invaded. Brother Pickering nominated a man to the office who was known to be a slaveholder, and who would have been elected had not Bishop Andrew—

Mr. Pickering. I would correct the brother. I never nominated any such man.

Dr. Winans. I am glad to be corrected, sir; but there are on the floor of this house those who are enlisted in the enterprise of degrading Bishop Andrew from his office who did propose such a measure. When we stated on this question, that we were prepared to vote for a slaveholder for the office of bishop, we were met by the introduction of James O. Andrew, and but for this a slaveholder would in all probability have been elected in 1832, and selected by northern and western men. I do not believe that I shall be contradicted on this subject, and in contradiction to the statement in the preamble of this resolution I may say, that we only just missed the election of a slaveholding bishop.

Well, now, sir, what are the facts of the case? Let us look them in the face. Suppose it had been inconsistent with the genius of Methodism—though it is not, and you know it is not, you dare not assert it, for the Discipline stares you in the face, if you do—but suppose it was contrary to the Discipline to elect a man to this office who held slaves; suppose all this, what are the facts of the case? Why, that Bishop Andrew had no part in constituting himself a slaveholder, inasmuch as he gave no consent thereto, and had no opportunity of expressing his dissent. This, I presume, will not be denied, inasmuch as the bishop's statement having been incorporated in the preamble, was presumed to be true. Well, then, what does he say in the first instance? Why, that without his consent, and indeed against it—for he laboured to free the girl who was left to him, but was overruled by the

strange fact that the girl, at years of discretion and intelligence, preferred to be a slave, and refused to be set free. This would appear strange to the north, but we in the south know all about it. Well, by the girl's own free and unrestrained determination to continue his slave, he was prevented from emancipating her, and her will bound him up to the destiny of being a slaveholder, in spite of all his desire to the contrary. The other case is of a similar character; the providential devolvement upon him of a slave whom he now declares free to go when and wherever he will, provided there be assurance that he will be provided for, or will be able to provide for himself. Bishop Andrew did not wish to be a slaveholder, but became one in spite of his efforts to the contrary.

Well, he was a slaveholder in 1840, exposed to the malediction of the north, and just as unfit for the general superintendency of the Union in December, 1843, as in January, 1844, for he was then a slaveholder. And what harm was there in marrying a woman who had been pronounced by one of the most venerated of our ministers to be as fit a lady for a bishop's wife as he ever saw? What evil had he done by becoming a slaveholder further by that marriage, when he was already a slaveholder beyond control? What had he done by that marriage to prejudice his case? Just nothing at all, for he was already a slaveholder by immutable necessity. In forming a matrimonial alliance, in seeking one who was to become the mother of his children and the companion of his declining years, he had married a pious and estimable lady, and that is the whole matter; and yet he is advised to leave the superintendency on this ground. It seems to me that this is the only ground maintained by the advocates of the resolution.

What has he done by executing the deed of trust? What did he do to alter the position of the slaves? Did he bring upon them any consequences prejudicial to them? Or did he incur any obligation to deprive that lady of her property because she had given him her hand? Why, the position will be this, that James O. Andrew must cease to be a bishop because he has married a lady; for he has done these negroes no harm by his momentary possession of them. Was it his duty to marry this lady in order that he might set these slaves free? If not, did such duty arise out of the fact that he had married the lady? The proposition condemns itself, inasmuch as a change of relation has taken place by marrying that lady, and he is now no longer a slaveholder except against his consent. By the providence of God at first, and by the unsolicited operations of fellow-beings, he is constituted a slaveholder, from which relation the laws of Georgia will not permit him to disengage himself. Being in this situation, and being exposed to the resentment of the north, he marries an interesting woman, and places her property back in her hands, under the precise circumstances in which it was before the marriage. And in spite of all this, this General Conference gravely meditates the act of removing him from that office he has filled with such entire satisfaction to the Church,

But, sir, the main point relied upon in this matter, is the expediency of the course contemplated. Expediency! Or, in other words, such a state of things has been gotten up in the north and in the west as renders it necessary for Bishop Andrew to retire from the office of the superintendency, if we would preserve the union of the Church. Sir, I will meet this by another argument on expediency. By the vote contemplated by this body, and solicited by this resolution, you will render it expedient—nay, more, you render it indispensable—nay, more, you render it *uncontrollably necessary*, that as large a portion of the Church—and, permit me to add, a portion always conformed in their views and practices to the Discipline of the Church—I say that by this vote you render it indispensably, ay, uncontrollably necessary that that portion of the Church should—I dread to pronounce the word, but you understand me. Yes, sir, you create an uncontrollable necessity that there should be a disconnection of that large portion of the Church from your body. It is not because there are prejudices waked up by unceasing agitation year after year, in opposition to the spirit and language of the Discipline, but it arises out of the established laws of society—from a state of things that is under the control of political and civil government, which no minister of the Gospel can control or influence in the smallest degree. If you pass this action in the mildest form in which you can approach the bishop, you will throw every minister in the south *hors du combat*; you will cut us off from all connection with masters and servants, and will leave us no option—God is my witness that I speak with all sincerity of purpose toward you—but to be disconnected with your body. If such necessity exists on your part to drive this man from his office, we reassert that this must be the result of your action

destiny; it comes with overwhelming force, and all we can do is to submit to it. Let this, then, pass before you, and then give such weight as you think fitting to the argument for expediency embraced in the preamble to this resolution, and let that determine your vote in this matter. There may come a time when your hearts will bleed at the recollection of having cut off from your body—for we will never go voluntarily—as firm and good friends, and as honest in our attachment to Discipline, as any other portion of the Church. Yes; the time may come in your after lives when you will lament an act that has been done so hurriedly. I say hurriedly, because it has been scarcely three weeks under consideration—hurriedly, because you have had no intercourse with your societies on the subject—hurriedly, because the question has not even been mooted in those regions where you apprehend your difficulty—and hurriedly, because you are cutting off thirteen hundred preachers and four hundred and fifty thousand members, against whom lies no allegation of having departed from the principles and laws of your book of Discipline. Sir, I protest against the vote that is sought on this question; and I conjure you by the love of God, by your regard for the Discipline of the Church, and by the interests of the south, to pause ere you take this step. I throw out of the consideration the interests of the masters of slaves, those hated, and abhorred, and despised beings—I leave out of the question the spiritual welfare of thousands of those poor oppressed people for whose interests and welfare you profess so much solicitation—the bleeding slave himself, cut off, by your action, from our approach, ministry, and counsels—I leave these things out of the question, and conjure you to let the union of our beloved Church plead effectually to prevent you from giving the vote which is sought by this resolution. Already, (and perhaps this may be the last time I shall have the opportunity to speak on the floor of this General Conference,) I say, already the evil effects of the abolition excitement are becoming apparent, for to that it is to be traced the dire necessity you plead in the case. It has hedged in the poor negro, and shut him up from access to his minister, and it has shut the mouth of the minister, and will you throw the blackness and darkness of death over him by your vote? Will you drive us from the connection, or will you hold back your hands and prevent the pernicious effects of such action as is at present sought at your hands? I leave the matter with you, and your conscience, and your God.

Mr. Bowen rose and said, I have a few remarks to make, and I presume I shall be heard. The subject has assumed an attitude in which I suppose it becomes me to speak out explicitly my views and feelings in relation to it. The case before us has been preceded by those conciliatory movements, which ought to characterize the incipient action of this body; and it does seem to me that we are now come to a point where it is proper and necessary that we should unequivocally express our views on the main point. It occurred to me that the brother last on the floor had overlooked one circumstance in connection with the history of the bishop. He supposed him equally liable to the action of this conference, by way of complaint, at the last session of the body as at the present time, since he was then as much connected with slavery as now. This seems to have been the fact; but it should be understood that the fact was not then known, at least to the northern delegations. He proceeded to vindicate the bishop against the imputation of crime. We have made no such charge. It may be expedient to request him to resign his office on other grounds, because he has voluntarily become connected with slavery. The question may arise, to be sure, whether he has become connected with it voluntarily or involuntarily; but assuming that he has not become connected with it voluntarily, it might, even on that ground—on that supposition—be expedient to request him, under the circumstances, to resign his office. We deprecate the idea of a division, sir. We know that our great republic is connected together by the twofold ties of civil and ecclesiastical union. We are aware, that to dissolve one of these ties would weaken the union of the whole, and, viewed under a civil aspect exclusively, we start back from the very idea; but, sir, it must be allowed that secession is preferable to schism. By schism, of course, is understood a division in the Church; and if this must prevail throughout the whole connection—if the convulsions must be felt from centre to circumference, it does seem to me that the disposition to pause in the choice of such an evil must lead us to secession rather than schism. It does seem to me that our venerable bishop has rendered himself unavailable as a general superintendent. These, in part, sir, are the views which have occurred to me. It appears to me that we have the control of every officer in the Church; and, in our belief, the interests of the Church, the peace and prosperity of the entire body, require this measure—we do it from a full conviction that we are

discharging a high and responsible duty, making no gains in a separation—if any portion of the Church should deem themselves called upon to secede, however we must deprecate such an event, it is unavoidable. It does seem to us, that while we cherish the best feeling toward the southern brethren, and would not throw the least implication upon their moral or religious character—it does seem to us that we are called upon to sustain the resolution offered by the brother from Baltimore.

Dr. Pierce next spoke as follows:—I have arisen, sir, on this occasion without any intention of attempting, in the present stage of this important matter, to make a set speech. Though my name may have been known a long time as a delegate in the General Conference, to this day it is equally well known that I have never in my life, with a very few exceptions, attempted to enter the list with debaters; and when I have ever attempted to say anything in the General Conference, it has been alone in view of some principle that I believed to be too precious and too conservative in its nature to be yielded without an effort on my part. I am induced, at this time, to ask the indulgence of the conference for a few moments for reasons which I believe I am fully authorized to entertain, but which I wish it distinctly understood I do not affirm to have been uttered substantially or particularly, as my mind is impressed on this occasion. Sir, it has been more than thirty-nine years since I gave myself, without reserve, to this great body of ministers and people; and inasmuch as my friends have always honoured me with a seat in the General Conference, I am induced to say what I intend to say at this stage of this momentous and affecting movement, for the reason that I believe it has been at least felt, if not expressed, that my utter silence on this subject was susceptible of being construed into a hope that I was more inclined to yield the matter in dispute than some of my brethren from the south, younger and more ardent than myself. I beg to say, sir, that if this opinion has been in anywise entertained, there could not have been a greater mistake. I believe, in so far as our feelings go, we are an undivided body; and I hope it will be a part of my epitaph, if I am honoured with one when I am dead, that, to the last line of this business, I entered my protest against the consequences connected with the resolution.

I rise, secondly, to endorse all that my beloved brother from the Mississippi Conference has uttered on this subject. It is true to the letter; and if this venerable body of ministers can deliberately, in the fear of God, with the book of Discipline in their hands, and doubtless in their minds, decide by vote to submit the request in that resolution to our beloved superintendent, we wish to notify them all, and singular—and we do not assume an opinion for the south, but utter the opinion of the south upon this subject—that to request Bishop Andrew to resign on account of the matter in dispute here, is only another way of requesting him to yield a principle vital to the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church. What may come hereafter, or what may come up in the settlement of the vote on this resolution, will be for after thought and after movement. There can be no other conclusion than this reached by any man who is acquainted with the local affairs of the southern portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Can anybody, therefore, expect that this man, blameless before heaven and before this congregation of ministers, even if he were asked to do this thing by two-thirds of this conference, could do it, would do it, dare do it, with the effects that would grow out of the movement written, with the finger of God, upon his heart? Is it the doctrine of expediency, sir? I believe that this is the only plea that can be put in that has one single vestige either of truth, justice, or propriety; and allow me to say, that unless I am greatly mistaken, the adoption of the resolution now before the General Conference, on the ground of expediency, is an act done by Methodist ministers by which, in the very nature of the case, they invert the established order of the New Testament. In the difficulties which arose in the Church in the days of the great apostle to the Gentiles, he said, in reference to this point, “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.” Shall we ask Bishop Andrew to pay this tribute to expediency? Why, if it were lawful to demand it, and the yielding of it would produce such disastrous results as must be produced, it would be inexpedient for this body of God-fearing ministers to make any such demand. To the law and to the testimony I feel myself bound closely to adhere. I would not say anything that has been said by any predecessor in this case; yet I beg leave to add, in further confirmation of the remarks made by my worthy brother Winans, that of all notions that were ever defended before a body of Christian ministers, the notion of asking an act of this sort on the ground of expediency, when it is as inexpedient for one portion of a united body of Christians to do this as it is expedient for the other that it should be done, is, to me, the most

fearful mockery of all sound logic. Do that which is inexpedient for us, because, for you, it is expedient! Never, while the heavens are above the earth, let that be recorded on the journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church! What is the evidence that it is expedient that this thing should be done in any portions of these growing states? The opinion and testimony of the brethren? Take our brethren on their own ground in other portions of the United States equally linked together by that golden chain which, if it be possible to avert it, I pray God may never be broken. Do you ask us how this matter is to be met? It is to be met by the conservative principle and the compromise laws of this book of Discipline. Show your people that Bishop Andrew has violated any one of the established rules and regulations of this Church, and that he refuses to conform himself to those established laws and usages, and you put yourselves in the right, and us in the wrong.

My beloved brethren, there is but one man older than myself in the land that I live in who is now in the ministry, and he is at present an inefficient man. I am the oldest efficient minister belonging to the Georgia Conference. I never wedded my heart to my family with less desires that this wedlock should be ruptured, than I did to the Church which found me a sinner, and I hope, through God's grace, will land me in heaven. And since the day that I made myself acquainted with the Methodist Church—and will the recording angel write, it this moment in the book of eternity—I affirm, that, so far as religion has been concerned in the south, no question has ever done so much harm to saving godliness as the intermeddling of the Methodist Church with the question of slavery; and could the cap of hell be lifted to-day, I fear that the groans of many damned would be heard coming up, and dating the ground of their fall from the merciless act of the Church against a free constitution and the laws of the land. The Methodist Church may have had much to do with slavery in the concrete, as it is called, but has no more business with slavery in the abstract than with the tariff; and, what is a great misfortune, you may put what construction you please on your actions and doings in this case, but you have "passed the Rubicon." In the year 1836 I desired that a protest should be entered on the journal of the conference against what was then believed to be the doctrine, that any man who, by any circumstance, was connected with domestic slavery, should be deemed as living under an act of outlawry with this Church.

Finally, I say, pass this resolution, and the whole of the southern states are hurled into confusion at once; and the brother that would lie down to be trampled upon by such an act of this body, would be regarded as unworthy the office he held, and unworthy to preach the Gospel of Jesus. I am against the resolution, and am glad to make it known that I am against it on principles pure as those that kindle the glory of high heaven—not because I am a pro-slavery man, but because God did not call me to legislate on these matters.

After some remarks from various speakers, and from Mr. Early on the injurious effects the passage of this resolution would have on the temporal prospects of the southern brethren, the conference adjourned until half-past three in the afternoon.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Mr. Wm. Cooper moved that the subject under discussion in the forenoon be postponed, and made the special order for to-morrow.

Mr. Drake and Mr. J. T. Peck opposed. Mr. Collins and Dr. Bangs were in favour. The motion was lost.

Mr. Berryman said, as there was a reluctance to speak, he would briefly address the conference, though he remembered the very proper remarks made in the morning respecting the younger men keeping silence. He had always done so except when the importance of the subject rendered it necessary for him to give a reason for his action. He was connected with a large section of the work, and but for his connection with the Indian mission he should probably not have been there at all. He wished now to give the reason for his vote, but he would not enter upon the merits of the case. He was not at present a slaveholder, but he had been so for some years during his ministry as a Methodist preacher, and he was never called to account for having slaves, nor was any rule brought to bear upon him in reference to them. But although he felt that they were better off as his slaves than if free, still, after revolving it in his mind for several years, he concluded that though they might be better off, he was not right in keeping them, and therefore he gave them their emancipation. But the question was not whether those holding slaves were sinners or not. Some of

the best and most holy and useful men had been slaveholders. He did not think the time was yet come for all men to do as he had done. He should give his vote with his eye fixed on the Discipline, and go only as far as he had law in the case. The preamble and resolution before them had no sanction in the rules of Discipline, and he should vote contrary to what his former conduct in the matter of his own slaves might indicate.

Mr. Coleman would give his vote in favour of the resolution, but would not like to be considered an enemy to his southern brethren. He had opposed abolitionism from the commencement. He hoped the resolution would pass, for the sake of the southern states, whose safety was involved in its passage. He, in connection with other northern brethren, had had to fight the battles of their southern brethren. He had stood the fire and smoke of abolitionism. He could name two upon the floor of that house who had done more for the defence of the southern brethren than almost all the southern brethren themselves. Give them a slaveholding bishop, and you blow up the fortress from its foundations. He had expected a most peaceful conference, supposing, as he did, that the firebrands had left their ranks last year, and he thought that now they should have peace in their borders. The southern brethren knew little of the labours of the northern men to secure their comfort and safety. Give them a slaveholding bishop, and they make the whole of the north a magazine of gunpowder, and the bishop a firebrand in the midst. The position Bishop Andrew sustained in the Church had made this matter to cause more trouble than anything he had ever known to take place in the Church. The step was wonderfully unfortunate.

Dr. Smith wished to correct the brother in his statement of a fact, and one on which the whole merit of his argument was based. It was that he, in deep sympathy with the south, had successfully warred against abolitionism. They had not so understood it, and if he would make his point good by argument he would have accomplished a great thing. They had viewed it differently, and believed it to be different. The arguments of the abolitionists had been as harmless as the lisping of helpless infancy in their influence on the south. They gained some bad eminence, and were the means of doing harm to the poor blacks. That the north opposed the abolitionists out of sympathy for the south, would demand proof. In 1836 the northern brethren complained that it was among them that abolitionism was doing all the mischief; that there its desolating footsteps were to be marked and mourned over, and groaned under, as a burden intolerable to be borne. And such was the truth of the case. In 1836 we were asked to leave this matter alone, and were told that the northern brethren had more at stake than we had. And they succeeded in shutting the mouths of some of the brethren, but not with my consent. They now would have it understood that it was for the south they then laboured.

Mr. Stringfield, addressing the conference, said,—The solemn silence which had pervaded this venerable body recently, during several minutes, reminded him of that awful pause which sometimes precedes a fearful contest between two contending armies. It was usual, on such occasions, to hear, now and then, yonder—and yonder—and there—and here—the warning guns from some picket guard. He wished to say something on this grave subject; and he wished to be heard before the heavy artillery opened. He felt great embarrassment in appearing as a speaker on that floor, on so solemn an occasion, and in the presence of so august an assembly of ministers and people. If the furrows on his cheek did but accord with the colour of his hair, he should feel less embarrassment; but no want of age on his part could release him from the high responsibilities which rested on him as a delegate from a conference, which, though it might appear small to some, having but three delegates, contained a multitude of people, and some forty thousand Church members—a membership nearly equal to that of the New-York Conference, with its ample delegation.

I am opposed, sir, (said he,) to the resolution before you, requesting Bishop Andrew to resign, for many reasons, but especially the following:—

First. It seeks to remove Bishop Andrew from office by means so remote as seemingly to cast the responsibility of such a measure on him, and thereby make him ostensibly accountable for its consequences, when, in fact, it ought to appear to rest, as it will, in fact, rest, wholly on ourselves. What we intend to do, let us appear to do. Sir, it becomes this venerable body of Christian ministers to meet the question fairly. Let us on this, as on all other subjects, act frankly and generously, coming up to the question like men. If one of our most beloved and

useful bishops is to be disrobed and degraded, let us not require him to do the deed himself; but let us have courage to do it in *form*, as we shall in *reality*.

My second reason for opposing the resolution is this: It is *inexpedient* that Bishop Andrew should resign. If the Bishop be shuffled out of office, some one must be elected to fill his place; and such a one, whoever he may be, will meet with as little favour in the south, as Bishop Andrew would, with all his disabilities, in the north. Who, sir, will elbow Bishop Andrew out of the pulpit, and fill his place in our southern congregations? Will any one do so that lifts his hand in favour of this resolution? It is not likely, sir, that another southern man will be elected; and, sir, a *line* is to be drawn by this vote. It will be a *test vote*—a *party* vote; and, sir, I know not what sort of heart a man must have that could go to the south, as Bishop Andrew's successor, under these circumstances. I am sure he would be unfit for a bishop. I know this is a delicate subject—and some may think it should not be mentioned here—but it will be thought of by the people, and, in spite of us, it will have its bearings. There are two sides to this question. Inexpediency is set over against expediency—one evil against another evil; and as a *lesser evil* is a *relative good*, it is to my mind clearly *inexpedient* for Bishop Andrew to resign. The only ground, therefore, which we can safely take is that of our book of Discipline. The only question which we have to act upon is what is *constitutional*? Some ultraists may break off from us; it is impossible to please all; but let us do what is *right*, and leave results with God, who will take care of his own. The arguments used by some on this floor, that it would do Bishop Andrew no harm to get him out of office by requesting him to resign—that it is only a *gentle request*, a *soft, kind* way of removing him, appear to me most preposterous—the most solemn trifling with his feelings, and with the grave subject which his case involves. Sir, such is Bishop Andrew's present position, that no act of his, nor of ours, removing him from office, can possibly prevent such removal from being attributed to his connection with slavery. He dare not—he *cannot*, without yielding a vital principle, concede that slavery is a disqualification for ministerial office, where, as in his case, emancipation is impossible.

Mr. Crowder said,—Mr. President, I rise, sir, in opposition to the resolution before the conference, requesting Bishop Andrew to resign his office as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In my remarks, sir, on this question, I intend to shed some light, if I can, and should I succeed in my intention, I hope it will be profitable: if, however, I should fail, I shall take my seat under the consciousness that I did the best I could. Sir, on what ground is Bishop Andrew requested to resign his office? It is stated by the mover to be that of *expediency*. Mark this. The father who offered the resolution, Rev. A. Griffith, and the one who immediately followed the mover, Rev. P. P. Sandford, both of them stated distinctly that the resolution was based on the ground of expediency. But what is the ground of this expediency? They both conceded, and did so with peculiar emphasis, that the operation of the request was not in the slightest degree to touch the bishop's moral and ministerial character, but only to affect his office as a creature of the General Conference: that in these respects, that is, in his moral and ministerial character as an elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he would still remain as fair as any other elder in said Church. Now, sir, this concession on the part of these fathers involves two things: 1st. That he has violated no precept of Christianity; and, 2dly. That he has violated no rule of our Discipline in becoming connected with slavery. You know, sir, that both the Scriptures and our Discipline assume the position, that no man is called to the office of a minister who is not soundly converted to God, nor can he remain a minister unless he continue to be holy; if, then, his moral character and his ministerial office be untarnished, the bishop has violated no precept of our holy Christianity.

In the second place, our Discipline demands of a minister of Jesus Christ the same purity of heart and rectitude of life which are inculcated in the Bible; and if these remain as fair as those of any other elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church, then he has violated no rule of our Discipline—because he could not have a fair moral and ministerial character if he were a transgressor of either the precepts of religion or the rules of Discipline. On what, then, I ask again, does this expediency stand as its foundation? Its foundation, sir, is a combination of circumstances; and this combination of circumstances has been brought about *chiefly* by a spirit which I may call "Legion." But where did this spirit start up? In the south? No, sir; the south has not been troubled at all. Its course has been quiet, obedient, and kind, leaving myself out of the question. The south, sir, has never made your

table groan with petitions and memorials for changes in our Discipline. The south has never made any aggressive complaints against the north. Sir, this spirit came up in the north and east; I mean the spirit of "abolition." This spirit has put the causes in operation which have brought about the combination of circumstances that is the basis of this expediency. Now, sir, I ask these fathers and these brethren if this basis of expediency is not too dark in origin, and ruinous in results, on which to depose our beloved Bishop Andrew? Can you do this, brethren?

But the question comes up again, What object is to be accomplished by the resignation of Bishop Andrew? Immediately the peace of the Church, and ultimately the freedom of the slaves of this country. But, sir, is this the best mode of bringing about this object? I do not think it is. For it is a well-known fact, as the brother from Troy has stated, that the abolition movement in the east has been greatly mischievous to the religious interests of the south; and herein I think my colleague from Virginia a little at fault [here Dr. Smith arose and explained] in the statement he recently made on that point. Time was in the south when coloured men were permitted to preach, to whom I have listened with pleasure and profit, but it is not so now. Abolition, in connection with other causes, induced the legislatures of the south, by law, to close the mouths of coloured men, except in a few favoured instances. It is well known how seriously the abolition movement affected the south, bringing about strife and division between them and the north. Now, sir, let it go abroad that this General Conference requested Bishop Andrew to resign on the ground of an expediency so doubtful as this, because he may not be cordially received in some portions of the north, and the division of our Church may follow—a civil division of this great confederacy may follow that, and then hearts will be torn apart, master and slave arrayed against each other, brother in the Church against brother, and the north against the south—and when thus arrayed, with the fiercest passions and energies of our nature brought into action against each other, civil war and far-reaching desolation must be the final results. My dear brethren, are you prepared for this? No, I am sure you are not. Then refuse to pass the resolution now pending before the conference, and permit our beloved bishop still to go on in his way of usefulness, and I am persuaded that the fears which many brethren honestly entertain will never be realized. Brethren, we have, as instruments in the hands of God, been doing a great work in the north and south; let us still work together for the honour of our common Saviour and the salvation of the souls of the people, white and coloured—let us bring the hearts of the community generally under the influence of religion, and the work of emancipation will come on as a natural result. This in my humble judgment is the only proper mode in which the desired object can be effected.

Having finished my argument, suffer me to say, sir, that I believe in my heart you, our beloved bishops, are all good, pious, and devoted men; and if you were all to die this moment, you all would pass safely through the gate into the city of the heavenly Jerusalem; but I humbly think Bishop Andrew would go in as certainly as any of you—my brethren believe so too, I know they do. Why then, I ask you, my brethren, will you vote to request Bishop Andrew to resign? I beg of you, in the name of our common Saviour, as you would not punish or afflict an innocent and worthy minister of our blessed Jesus, not to vote for that resolution. No, never.

Mr. Spencer said,—I feel some trepidation in appearing as a speaker before this grave body. I do so under a sense of duty and in view of my responsibilities. As yet I have said but little, and it is not my purpose to occupy your attention often. My remarks shall be as brief as may be.

Well, sir, it is alleged that our present action is a novel procedure. Admitted; but whose fault is it? We never, till now, had occasion to complain of any of our general superintendents. We now have, and therefore our proceedings must be new. This is plain. The inquiry is raised, by what rule can we touch Bishop Andrew? What specific rule has he violated? We ought to remember that the mere silence of the Discipline in regard to a particular case is no evidence that action in that case would be contrary to our rules. An illustration will place this in its true light. Suppose that instead of marrying a respectable lady owning slaves, Bishop Andrew had married a coloured woman. Would southern or northern brethren say, either that he had broken an express rule of Discipline, or that he would nevertheless be well qualified for a bishop in our Church? Neither the one nor the other. They doubtless would depose him at once, though there is no rule to be found declaring, in so many words, that no white man shall marry a coloured woman on pain of degradation. It is thought by some that before the case can be

reached a new rule must be made; and if so, it would be an *ex post facto* law. So says some driveller in the Tribune Extra found yesterday in the conference room. He was ashamed to give his name, and well he might, as he knew he was meddling with other people's business, and at the same time dealing in slanderous allegations. Let us look at this. An *ex post facto* law is always retrospective. But if we made a rule to rid ourselves of our present difficulty, it would not be to punish a past offence, but to remove from our ecclesiastical car a present incumbrance, and one that must be removed or crush us into ruin. We may make rules for existing emergencies, and for such purpose many of our rules and regulations have been made.

But we have a rule. A bishop may be expelled by the General Conference for "improper conduct." "Improper conduct," says one of our bishops, "is a small offence, less than an immorality." The Discipline does not define "improper conduct." Nor is it necessary. "Our statute law," says a respectable author, "provides that murder shall be punished with death; but it does not define what murder is. For this definition we resort to common law." So in the present case, the General Conference must determine what improper conduct is. It has full power either to punish, or merely to remove from office in such cases.

We hear much concerning the constitution. The word constitutional is repeated again and again. Here I am at a loss. I cannot tell what brethren mean. I suppose the constitution of our Church to be embodied in our articles of religion, our restrictive rules, and our general rules. But where is it said, in these, that a slaveholding bishop must remain in office despite of the General Conference? or that no rule can be made to touch such a case? Nowhere. Then is it not plain that these are high-sounding words used without meaning? But, sir, much is said of expediency. Well, let us look at *expediency*. It is alleged that it would be a dreadful thing to pass the resolution before us, as a matter of expediency. This is a grave subject. But is not expediency at the foundation of many grave and important subjects? Mr. President, how did you and your colleagues get into the episcopal office? Expediency put you there, expediency keeps you there, and when expediency requires it, you shall be removed from your seats,—yes, every one of you. Expediency is the foundation of our episcopacy. Nay more, it is the very basis of Methodism. We are conjured by a brother, in a solemn manner, to refrain, lest we ruin souls. He doubts not, that, if we could open the doors of perdition, and look down into the world of woe, we should find that souls were lost by being driven from the Methodist Church through her action against slavery in the days of our fathers! I meet this by remarking, some think in that event we would be likely to hear wallings arising from those doomed to hell by reason of our connivance at slavery. Let the one balance the other. But here is the rule. It seems our Church has retired from its original ground. And shall we keep on till we can sit quietly under the administration of a slaveholding bishop? Never.

Brethren tell us, we do not know but our people would endure a slaveholding bishop very well. We are advised on that point. Some of us thought it improper in our friends to send so many remonstrances against having a slaveholding bishop, or rather electing one; because we supposed that was a matter that never would take place. We never dreamed that we had one already! The evil is upon us, and now we must get rid of it as best we may. The brother who has just taken his seat supposes, that, inasmuch as we bring no charges against the moral and ministerial character of Bishop Andrew, we fully approve him in these respects. That does not follow. As to these, we say nothing. Some may approve, and others disapprove. But, if in these respects he were as immaculate as an angel in heaven, we hold that, as a slaveholder, he is utterly unqualified to discharge the functions of his episcopal office in the greater part of our work. He ought therefore to resign, or be deposed. It is said, however, in extenuation, that he was made a slaveholder, "not with his own consent," or as a brother says, "he was made a slaveholder by force and compulsion." Let us see. Several years ago one fell to him by bequest, and afterward his former wife inherited another. She died, and that one became legally his slave. Now I grant one person may bequeath property to another without his consent, but he cannot receive it without his consent. That is the point. I am a citizen of Virginia, and do you think I would be made a slaveholder against my will? A freeman to be compelled! What an idea! But allow that in these instances Bishop Andrew "became a slaveholder by compulsion," how did he happen to get so much deeper into the business? Did a grave and venerable bishop, old enough to be a grandfather, get into a chicken-fit? Was

he compelled against his will, by pure love, to marry a woman surrounded by a dark group of negroes? Can you believe that? No, he did it voluntarily. Then let no one insult the good sense of this conference by insinuations that he became a slaveholder by compulsion. But he is now a slaveholder, and he cannot get clear of the evil. Indeed! Suppose, sir, you would appoint me to a circuit abounding with decent towns and moral neighbourhoods, but at one end of it there is a place where they shoot squirrels on Sunday, and play cards regularly. Now suppose I settle myself there and participate in their practices. And suppose, moreover, when requested by the people in other parts of my circuit to leave off such practices, I should say, I cannot, the people would ruin me and my family. What would be thought of my conduct? I would be told, in short order, either to move my family to another part, or not impose my ministrations upon decent folks. Apply this. Bishop Andrew is a bishop of the whole Methodist Episcopal Church, and is in duty bound to go to any part of it that its interests may require. If he cannot get rid of slavery where he is, let him go where he can.

Fearful things are said about division. Our feelings have been roused up. We have wept and prayed. The clouds have gathered in the distance. We have seen the lightning. We have heard the muttering thunders. Our destruction is threatened. But if it comes, how can we help it? We have made no change, and we ask none. Who has brought this evil upon us? If we are ruined, on whose head will rest the blood of a murdered Church? The Lord have mercy on us! We now come to this point:—Shall we stand by our principles? Will we maintain true Methodism? Or shall we suffer the most daring innovation upon our usages? Must our foundations be uprooted, and our fair edifice be tumbled into destruction by retaining a slaveholder in the episcopacy? Our votes must tell.

THURSDAY, MAY 23.

Dr. Bangs addressed the conference. He congratulated the conference on the kind and Christian spirit they had hitherto maintained, which he hoped would be preserved through the whole of this important debate. He would make a few remarks on what fell from Dr. Winans. That gentleman had said that the preamble contained in the proposition was not true, because it affirmed that the having a slaveholding bishop was contrary to usage. Must they adopt a practice to make it contrary to usage? When a practice has always been adopted, it certainly is according to usage. Now (said Dr. Bangs) I think that anything that has not been introduced into the practice of the Church is contrary to the usage of the Church. This appears to me to be self-evident. But the brother affirmed, if I understood him right, that northern men were ready to vote for a slaveholding bishop, and that consequently it had like to have become the usage of the Church to have such in the episcopacy. Now, I never understood from any northern man that he was willing to vote for a slaveholding bishop. It was further affirmed that it was only defeated by trick and management. I do not know anything about such a trick. I never was in a caucus at all about the nomination of a bishop. But I have heard from the mover of this resolution, that in 1832 the Baltimore delegation sent a committee to wait on a slaveholder from the south, and ask him if he was willing to emancipate his slaves, if they would nominate him for the office of bishop. He very courteously, and in a Christian spirit, took time to deliberate, and eventually told them he could not do it, and that was the reason why they declined to nominate him. Did that look like nominating a slaveholder to the episcopacy? And they nominated James O. Andrew because he was not a slaveholder; but at that time he was not generally known to the General Conference, and I am given to understand that only about a dozen votes were given him from the south, or slaveholding states. At any rate, he had not a majority of the southern states, and he could not have been elected without the votes of the northern conferences. So much, then, as to the allegation that the appointment of a slaveholder to the office of bishop was not contrary to the usage of the Church and to its principles. We have been uniform on that subject. Now, sir, I wish to correct an error the brother from Virginia made yesterday. He said that this originated in abolitionism. This is a mistake. It is the old Methodist anti-slavery feeling, and I would make no allusion either to abolitionists or slaveholders. I love them both, God knows I do. Now, with respect to the propriety of the resolution before the conference. I think there are many things that would disqualify a man for holding the office of bishop that do not amount to immorality. Suppose Bishop Hedding should come out and declare that it was a sin to hold slaves under any circumstances. This would identify

him with the ultra party, and I would vote for his retiring, because it would disqualify him for his work as superintendent over the whole Church. I will suppose another case. Let one of our bishops be unmarried, and go into the work, and marry a free coloured woman, would it not, in the sense of the whole community, disqualify him for his office? And yet it would not be an act of immorality. And it is on this principle that I say Bishop Andrew has disqualified himself by connecting himself with slavery, because he cannot acceptably exercise his duties as a general officer of the Church.

Now the doctrine of expediency has been referred to. Let me give you one item of expediency that the Apostle Paul practised, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend;" and if Bishop Andrew had practised that kind of expediency we should not have had the present difficulty. But his connection with slavery was "against his will." I will acknowledge that, in the first case, he had no agency; but will any one avow that he was not a free agent when he connected himself with this lady? No one will avow that. He therefore acted imprudently. As was shown by the brother who opened this case, there is a marked difference between an elder, a deacon, and a bishop. The office and work of a bishop are of a general character, not confined to any particular place; and when he disqualifies himself from exercising his office for the good of the whole Church, he disqualifies himself from holding that office. With regard to our southern brethren, I hold them to be entitled to all the offices of the ministry, and never will I perform any act that will go to deprive them of their rights, and never will I perform an act that will go to abridge the privileges of the abolitionists. I never did believe, nor do I now believe, that holding slaves under all circumstances is a sin. Others believe that, and sincerely, and every one knows how we boldly contended against such a conclusion in the New-York Conference. We acted then in the integrity of our hearts, and as we believed would be for the good of the Church, and the preservation of its union. I wish, sir, to concentrate all my remarks on this one point, that anything that would disqualify a man for the office of bishop is fit ground for the action of this General Conference; and I say, to declare that every man who holds a slave sins in so doing, would be a disqualification; and so also, that to enter upon the possession of slaves under the peculiar circumstances would unfit a man for the high office of a general superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We do not touch the moral character of Bishop Andrew at all. We do not wish to do it. We say that he has acted imprudently, and that we think it necessary in view thereof that he should resign his office as a bishop. But while we thus press this matter, we no less fervently pray that the great Head of the Church may overrule all our deliberations and decisions for the promotion of his glory and the good of a lost world.

Dr. Capers understood that some remarks applying to him personally had been made by the last speaker, and he asked leave to explain.

Mr. Finley, who had taken the floor at the commencement, and been recognized by the President, pressed his right to offer a substitute to the resolution.

Bishop Hedding said, that brother Capers had no right to make any explanation, unless some remarks of his had been misrepresented. The only way by which he could be heard would be a suspension of the rules.

Dr. Durbin thought the general desire was that Dr. Capers should speak.

Mr. Finley would give way with all his heart for Dr. Capers to explain, but not for him to enter upon the main question.

Dr. Capers said, he should experience some difficulty in explaining in the case, for not being able that morning to get to the conference at its commencement, he had not himself heard the exact words to which he was about to refer. On entering the house he was told that the last speaker had been making a statement on the authority of a brother from the Baltimore Conference to the effect that a deputation from that conference had, in 1832, waited upon a southern brother to inquire whether, if he were nominated to the episcopacy, he would emancipate his slaves. Now, I have to say distinctly, that the whole of that statement strikes my ear for the first time this morning. I never heard the thing before—NEVER, NEVER, NEVER. And as I cannot now enter fully into the matter, I claim the right of adverting to it when I have possession of the floor.

Mr. Davis, with the consent of Mr. Finley, wished to say, that his name had been given in this conversation. He deeply regretted that brethren should be brought into personal contact with each other on the floor of the conference. But for his wish to avoid that, he should have interrupted Dr. Winans on the preceding day.

He (Mr. D.) distinctly recollected that he had a conversation with Dr. Capers, the object of which was this: he was requested by a part, or it might be, the whole of his delegation, which consisted of sixteen delegates, to have a conversation with Dr. Capers, and make inquiry to this effect: "Would it be practicable for you to free yourself from connection with slavery, in view of a nomination to the episcopacy? we wish to use you." And this was the reason: they were not acquainted with James O. Andrew; but they were acquainted with Dr. Capers, and very much preferred him. They held a free, friendly, and Methodist-preacher-like conversation. The doctor said that he was a slaveholder and doomed to remain a slaveholder; that it was beyond his power to free himself from connection with slavery, and that he would present a man that would make a better bishop than himself. And perhaps that was true, for they had had in the person of James O. Andrew a most excellent bishop. Now, that the doctor did nominate to the caucus committee James O. Andrew would not be denied, because it could be proved by more than a dozen there. He liked then, and always had liked, the Christian simplicity of that brother.

Mr. Finley rose to offer a substitute for the main resolution.

Dr. Capers hoped the brother would allow him to speak in regard to a personal matter. He understood from a remark of a respected friend and brother from Virginia, that the observation of Dr. Bangs, which was made before he entered the house, went to make the impression that there had been a distinct proposition put to him by a brother from the Baltimore delegation, to know whether, for the consideration of his being nominated for the episcopacy, he would liberate his slaves. It would readily occur to the conference, as well as to the brother, whose kindness toward the speaker he could most truly reciprocate, that while he could not possibly charge his recollection with every personal circumstance that must have passed between them, he could not have been in fault in the manner which had been represented. If the Baltimore delegation had sent brother Davis to him for the purpose of making a proposition that he should emancipate his slaves for the consideration of a nomination to the episcopacy, they knew him not.

Mr. Davis rose and said, that the brother was entirely changing the whole aspect of the question. He had never said such a thing, but merely that he was sent to know if the proposal would be practicable, and he had had a similar conversation at Pittsburg.

Dr. Capers could say much on the ground of a personal explanation, but he did not wish to trespass on the indulgence of the General Conference. He was free to admit that the nomination of Bishop Andrew came from Georgia. He had been told in Baltimore and Philadelphia that he himself would be preferred, by so many that it had caused him pain. Some of the elder brethren would well remember the part which he took on that occasion. It pained him to think that his most confidential, beloved, and honoured brother, with whom he had laboured shoulder to shoulder in the work of the Lord, was likely to be brought to this antagonist position to himself, or himself to that brother. He had even begged for a mutual conference that brother Andrew might be fixed upon, to be elected to the episcopacy by general vote. He was urged to accept of this appointment, and mentioned his circumstances with regard to slavery; but the circumstances never affected him in the light of constitutional law, right, or privilege, but in view of his own personal privileges, and sensibilities as a man. The brethren knew not the pain it had given him from General Conference to General Conference to stand upon the floor and look at a brother delegate and think that he himself was regarded as a man stealer. His name had gone forth, time and again, in the northern papers in this way; but who of his northern friends had ever troubled himself to write a line in vindication of his character and position? He hoped the conference would not for one moment entertain the thought that he had encouraged his nomination for the episcopacy. He had constantly opposed it, and yet when the election came on, the speaker did receive some votes, perhaps forty; but from whom did they come? Not from the south, who voted for Bishop Andrew; nor did he believe they came from the west; but, except one or two votes, they were from the north.

Dr. Winans would ask if it were not within the knowledge of brother Davis that some four or five months before the convening of the General Conference of 1832, arrangements were made by some individual belonging to the Baltimore Conference in order to secure the election of a southern non-slaveholding man.

Mr. Davis replied,—I solemnly declare that this is the first time I ever heard such a thing, to the best of my recollection.

Dr. Winans believed he could present twenty witnesses to prove his affirmation. Bishop Soule would respectfully advise the brethren not to refer to individual words or private transactions. These private transactions could have no real effect upon the main question. It would rest on far higher principles.

Mr. Pickering wished to explain. He had been referred to as having said something that was not true. He had no recollection of ever nominating the brother for the episcopacy; but this was not because he had not a high esteem for him, as he would be as willing to nominate him as any other brother. If he had said anything, it was to suggest Dr. Capers as a suitable man to make the nomination.

Mr. Finley's preamble and resolution were then read, as follows:—

"Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency, and whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains.

(Signed)

J. B. FINLEY,
J. M. TRIMBLE."

He proceeded,—I have offered that resolution as a substitute because I have thought it would meet the case better than any yet offered. I may be wrong. But first it rests the proposition on its true grounds. We know well that this General Conference is restricted in reference to an itinerant general superintendency. That the itinerant general superintendency ought to circulate everywhere there can be no doubt. The resolution does not impeach the character of Bishop Andrew in any way; and as no brother here would deny the fact that he had become connected with slavery, the resolution is predicated on the principle, that the act had brought after it circumstances which would impede and prevent his circulation as an itinerant general superintendent. What do we request of Bishop Andrew in that resolution? We don't depose him as a bishop; we only say it is the sense of the General Conference that he ought to cease to exercise the office till this embarrassment ceases. I do not wish the bishop to resign. I have no such disposition, if the objections to his superintendency were out of the way. I will permit no man on the floor to say that he has a warmer attachment to Bishop Andrew than I have. I love him as a Christian, as a minister, and as a bishop. I hope this General Conference will give him a little time, and perhaps he will by and by be able, consistently with his interests at the south, to free himself from this incubus of slavery, and we shall have him with us again as our beloved bishop. I hope the substitute offered will be adopted.

Mr. Spencer said he could not vote for the resolution in its present form; he would, therefore, move that it be so amended as to read, *free himself from slavery*.

An amendment on a substitute was pronounced by the chair out of order.

Dr. Olin rose to speak on Mr. Finley's substitute. He referred to the state of his health, which always disqualified him for long sittings in conference, and which, under the added pressure of an afternoon session, admonished him that he might be unable to be present throughout the entire discussion—that he might even be kept away at the final vote, a circumstance which he should much regret. This, said Dr. O., is my only apology for seeking, so early, an opportunity for the expression of my sentiments on the general question, to which I will now proceed, if I may have the indulgence of the conference. May I be allowed first to offer another remark, which I could wish had not, like the last, exclusive reference to myself? My relation to this subject is somewhat peculiar and most painful on account of my personal attachments and cherished friendships, and is a delicate subject, which, if it were compatible with my duty, and I could feel at liberty to do so, I would gladly leave to other hands and heads. Yet the very delicacy and difficulty of my position render it the more imperative upon me to give an explicit expression of my views—the more so because I know I am regarded by many as hemmed in by circumstances so untoward, that I am likely to be trammelled if not controlled, in spite of myself. Now I will not affirm that I shall be exempt from these misleading influences, yet will I promise so much—it shall be my aim to act as an honest man, with a single eye to the glory of God. My delicacies are not all on one side. They press upon me with equal force on all sides, and so leave me as free as others, it may be, to obey the dictates of duty.

I give to the substitute offered by the venerable brother from Ohio a decided preference over the original resolution. I feel strong objections to that resolution, and no less to the preamble. I am not prepared to say that the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church contains, or is meant to contain, any provision against the election of a slaveholding bishop, nor do I believe that any such inference is fairly deducible from it. I must hesitate, therefore, to avow such a doctrine. I may not affirm directly, or by any implication, that the Discipline is averse to the election of a slaveholder to that office. Now it seems to me that this idea is conveyed when it is said that such an election, or that the holding of slaves by a bishop, is contrary to the "settled policy and usage" of the Church. Since the organization of the federal government on its present basis, the office of president has been occupied during thirty-five years by citizens of Virginia, and forty-three by slaveholders, while that high honour has been enjoyed only twelve years by northern statesmen. Would it be a proper use of language to say that it is the "settled policy and usage" of our country, that the office of president should be for the most part confined to southern men? "Usage" carries, to some extent, at least, the idea of common law and acknowledged right or privilege. In this sense it is obviously inapplicable to the case in hand. We have hitherto had no slaveholder for bishop, not that we have a law against it, but because the non-slaveholding candidates have always received a majority of the votes. The majority will always be able to judge of what the interests or sentiments of the whole Church from time to time may demand, and such a declaration as that in the preamble is uncalled for, as well as not strictly true. The facts alleged as the ground of the resolution, if true, are at least disputable, as we have the best possible proof in the discussions and explanations to which we have just listened. They are not matters of record, or history, or general notoriety, and they are not adapted to be the basis of our solemn decision in a case of such grave importance.

I do not like the issue to which that resolution sought to lead us. I do not wish by any act or vote of mine to say or insinuate that Bishop Andrew is not a most desirable man for the episcopacy. Undoubtedly, under the pressure of our difficulties, had he voluntarily come forward, and done what the conference by that resolution ask him to do, it might have been the best way to relieve us from the embarrassment. At least some may think so. But I doubt the propriety of asking him to do, under the constraining influence of our vote, what, if done at all, ought to be done voluntarily; for it might thus be understood that even if he were free from this embarrassment, we still should not prefer to have him for a bishop.

I look upon this question after all, not as a legal, but as a great practical question; and my views are quite disembarassed from constitutional scruples or difficulties. We came to this General Conference from the north, south, east, and west, with the best dispositions in all parties to harmonize as well as we might, and to make the least of our differences. There were few symptoms of discontent or disaffection, and it was generally thought that we should now make a satisfactory settlement of our difficulties, and go home more harmonious than ever in feeling and action. I had good reason for coming to this conclusion. I knew, or thought I knew, the feelings of my brethren in the north and east, and I had enjoyed a pretty free correspondence and intercourse with brethren of the south; and I am sure we all came up to this conference with the best purposes, and the best hopes. I was ill, and did not reach the conference at the commencement, and it was not until I had taken my seat on this floor, and heard of the difficulties which surrounded us, that my mind was robbed of these hopes. I was stunned and overwhelmed with the tidings, and in ten minutes made up my mind that our embarrassments were stupendous, if not insuperable. I have since made diligent inquiries from brethren as to the actual condition and sentiments of the northern Churches, and what would be the results there, if things remain as they are. I have, for the most part, refrained from going to the men who have taken part in the controversies that have agitated us hitherto, because I thought their testimony, in a case of this sort, might not perhaps be so much relied upon; but I have addressed my inquiries to men whom I know to be opponents of the abolition movement; and they concur in believing that this is precisely the state of things in which they most fear to return home to their flocks—and they declare, with one consent, that the difficulty is unmanageable and overwhelming. I hope it will turn out in the end that their fears outrun the reality. But, I confess, I know not where to look for testimony in this matter, but to the accredited, and venerable, and discreet representatives of the various conferences; and I repeat, that, forming my conclusions on this ground,

our most prudent men do regard our present condition as pregnant with danger, and as threatening manifold disasters and disaffections throughout the Methodist Episcopal Church; and, after making what allowance we can for any local or partial view, I am still compelled to regard the evil as a great and portentous one. It addresses itself to us as the only tribunal having the legitimate authority to act in the premises.

The calamity has come without warning. The intelligence has fallen down upon us like a thunder-bolt from a serene sky; but we must grapple with the difficulties. It is for this General Conference alone to dispose of them in some way. It must be remembered, however, that this conference is limited in its action by constitutional restrictions, which it may not transcend for the removal of the most ruinous evil. I can conceive of questions coming up here, so beset with legal and constitutional embarrassments, that this General Conference could only weep over them, and give such counsel as it might judge proper. If there ever was a question beset with great practical difficulties, surely it is that, under which we now groan; it is so hedged about and filled with evils, which this conference cannot hope to prevent or cure. Yet our powers are so great as to allow us to make some provision against them, and to some extent, at least, meet the wants of the Church, in this great emergency. We may do much, and we may make many arrangements in regard to the episcopacy; but our powers are still limited and restricted in two things. We cannot do away with the episcopacy; we cannot infringe upon its character as a general superintendency. Within these limits, it seems to me, that we have large powers—plenary powers for carrying out through the episcopacy the general purposes of the conference and the Church. We may almost do what we will, avoiding to come in conflict with the general rules, and the rights of individuals. Unquestionably the conference cannot touch the ministerial rights of any one of its members or officers. I believe we are all prepared to recognize the right of southern brethren to hold slaves under the provisions of the Discipline. We shall acknowledge and guaranty the entire of the privileges and immunities of all parties in the Church. I here declare, that if a remedy should be proposed that would trench on the constitutional claims of southern ministers, I would not, to save the Church from any possible calamity, violate this great charter of our rights. I am glad of the opportunity of saying, that no man, who is a Methodist, and deserves a place among us, can call in question here any rights secured by our charter. I do not say that he may not be a very honest, or a very pious man, who doubts the compatibility of slaveholding, on the conditions of the Discipline, with the ministerial office; but in this he is not a Methodist. He may be a very *good man*, but a very *bad Methodist*; and if such a man doubts if the Church will reform, or is too impatient of delay, let him, as I would in his place, do as our friends in New-England did last year, go to some other Church, or set up one for himself.

Not only is holding slaves, on the conditions and under the restrictions of the Discipline, no disqualification for the ministerial office; but I will go a little further, and say, that slaveholding is not constitutionally a forfeiture of a man's right, if he may be said to have one, to the office of a bishop. The Church, spread out through all the land, will always determine for itself what are disqualifications and what are not, and it has a perfect right to determine whether slaveholding, or abolitionism, or any other fact, shall be taken into consideration in its elections.

These are my principles. I have never doubted with regard to them. I will add, that I can never give a vote which does violence to my sentiments in regard to the religious aspect of the subject. I here declare, that, if I ever saw the graces of the Christian ministry displayed, or its virtues developed, it has been among slaveholders. I wish here to divest myself of what, to some, may seem an advantage that does not belong to me. I will not conceal—I avow that I was a slaveholder, and a minister at the south, and I never dreamed that my right to the ministry was questionable, or that in the sight of God I was less fitted to preach the Gospel on that account. And if the state of my health had not driven me away from that region, I should probably have been a slaveholder to this day. In this day of reform, and manifold suggestions, I go further, and say, that, if by a vote of this General Conference, you might call in question the right of our southern brethren to the ministry, and make their claim to the sacred office dependant on their giving immediate freedom to their slaves, I do not think that that would be a blessing to the slaves, or to the Church. I do not believe the slave fares worse for having a Christian master, and I think the preachers may have more of public confidence on our present plan. I know these opinions may by some be

regarded as unsound, and I make them not because they have any special value or novelty, but because I profess to speak my sentiments freely.

With regard to the particular case before us, I feel constrained to make one or two remarks. If ever there was a man worthy to fill the episcopal office by his disinterestedness, his love of the Church, his ardent, melting sympathy for all the interests of humanity, but above all for his uncompromising and unreserved advocacy of the interest of the slave—if these are qualifications for the office of a bishop, then James O. Andrew is pre-eminently fitted to hold that office. I know him well. He was the friend of my youth, and although by his experience and his position fitted to be a father, yet he made me a brother, and no man has more fully shared my sympathies, or more intimately known my heart, for these twenty years. His house has been my home; on his bed have I lain in sickness, and he, with his sainted wife now in heaven, has been my comforter and nurse. No question under heaven could have presented itself so painfully oppressive to my feelings as the one now before us. If I had a hundred votes, and Bishop Andrew were not pressed by the difficulties which now rest upon him, without any wrong intention on his part I am sure, he is the man to whom I would give them all. I know no man who has been so bold an advocate for the interest of the slaves; and when I have been constrained to refrain from saying what perhaps I should have said, I have heard him at camp meetings and on other public occasions call fearlessly on masters to see to the spiritual and temporal interests of their slaves, as a high Christian duty. Excepting one honoured brother, whose name will hereafter be recorded as one of the greatest benefactors of the African race, I know of no man who has done so much for the slave as Bishop Andrew. I know, sir, I am not speaking to the question, but I am stating facts, facts which I am sure will lead brethren to act with caution and tenderness in this business.

It will be readily inferred, from what I have said, that if we cannot act without calling in question the rights of the southern brethren, we had better, in my opinion, not act at all, for I believe it would be better to submit to the greatest calamities than infringe upon our own constitution. Yet it seems to me that we are not shut up to such a disastrous course, and that we may so dispose of this case as to escape both these difficulties. We cannot punish. I would not vote for any resolution that would even censure; and yet, with the powers that confessedly belong to the General Conference, I trust some measure may be adopted that may greatly palliate and diminish, if it cannot wholly avert, the dangers that threaten us. The substitute now proposed I regard as such a measure. In it this General Conference expresses its wish and will that, under existing circumstances—meaning, by that word, not merely the fact that Bishop Andrew has become a slaveholder, but the state of the Church, the sentiments that prevail—the excitement, and the deep feeling of the people on the subject—feeling, it may be, which disqualifies them for calm, dispassionate views in the premises—that, under these circumstances, it is the wish and will of the brethren of this conference that Bishop Andrew, against whom we bring no charge, on whose fair character we fix no reproach, should, for the present, refrain from the exercise of his episcopal functions. This resolution proposes no punishment. It does not censure. It expresses no opinion of the bishop's conduct. It only seeks to avert disastrous results by the exercise of the conservative, of the self-preserving, powers of this conference.

If the brethren who occupy the extreme positions in this question seek rather to allay than excite the fever of feeling, we will yet hope—even allow me to *believe*—that these difficulties may be removed. I had even thought, if we could so manage this question as to avoid casting any reflections upon the south; if we could hold Bishop Andrew without an impeachment; if we are careful to save that point as far as possible, I have confidence that, whenever he believes he can do it without compromising a principle, which I know, in the present situation, he feels himself called upon to represent and maintain—if we could save that point, and hold up a shield over the interests dearer to him and others than his own life even—I do not allow myself to despair that, as soon as circumstances will allow, and difficulties, now insuperable, shall be removed, he will be ready to make great sacrifices for the general good of the Church. I have no right to say so. I only give it as my conviction, that if he can possibly relieve us of our embarrassment he will. My confidence in the man is such, that I have no hesitation in asserting this. I look at this proposition not as a punishment of any grade or sort. It is as if you were to say to Dr. Peck, your editor, who, for some cause, might have become unpopular, “You are our agent. Circumstances, at present, are unfavourable to your exercising your

functions; and in the exertion of our just discretion in the case, and because your want of favour with the public interferes with the success of that department over which you are placed, we withdraw you, for the present, from this particular field of duty. We do not censure you, and we cordially retain you in the ranks of our ministry." I am not learned in constitutional law. It is, perhaps, for want of larger experience that this is the only view I am able to take of this subject; at which, however, I think I have arrived by a course, I will not say of sound argument, but by natural and easy approaches. With my constitutional views, I am allowed to inquire in this case which course will do the least harm? And I believe that which is proposed by this substitute to be a constitutional measure, dishonourable to none, unjust to none. As such I should wish it to go forth, with the solemn declaration of this General Conference that we do not design it as a punishment, or a censure; that it is, in our apprehension, only a prudential and expedient measure, calculated to avert the great evils that threaten us.

I know the difficulties of the south. I know the excitement that is likely to prevail among the people there. Yet, allowing our worst fears all to be realized, the south will have this advantage over us—the southern conferences are likely, in any event, to harmonize among themselves—they will form a compact body. In our northern conferences this will be impossible in the present state of things. They cannot bring their whole people to act together on one common ground; stations and circuits will be so weakened and broken as in many instances to be unable to sustain their ministry. I speak on this point in accordance with the conviction of my own judgment, after having travelled three thousand miles through the New-England and New-York Conferences, that if some action is not had on this subject calculated to hold out hope—to impart a measure of satisfaction to the people—there will be distractions and divisions ruinous to souls, and fatal to the permanent interests of the Church.

I feel, sir, that if this great difficulty shall result in separation from our southern brethren, we lose not our right hand merely, but our very hearts' blood. Over such an event I should not cease to pour out my prayers and tears as over a grievous and unmitigated calamity. It was in that part of our Zion that God, for Christ's sake, converted my soul. There I first entered on the Christian ministry. From thence come the beloved, honoured brethren who now surround me, with whom and among whom I have laboured, and suffered, and rejoiced, and seen the doings of the right hand of the Son of God. If the day shall come when we must be separated by lines of demarkation, I shall yet think often of those beyond with the kindest, warmest feelings of an honest Christian heart. But, sir, I will yet trust that we may put far off this evil day. If we can pass such a measure as will shield our principles from all infringement—if we can send forth such a measure as will neither injure nor justly offend the south—as shall neither censure nor dishonour Bishop Andrew, and yet shall meet the pressing wants of the Church; and, above all, if Almighty God shall be pleased to help by pouring out his Spirit upon us, we may yet avoid the rock on which we now seem but too likely to split.

I will add one word in reference to what has been so often repeated about the abolition excitement in New-England and the north. I have never thought it a good thing to introduce agitation into the Church. I have thought it better, so far as practicable, to keep clear from all controversies, and, for myself, have felt bound to do so. I have been kept from taking any part in the great abolition controversy by the arrangements of Providence; but I must declare that the interests, the purposes, the measures which seem at this time to unite the north in sympathy have not originated with abolitionists, usually so called. The concern felt on the subject now before us is much more general. The New-York Conference, of which I was made a member when abroad, and without my knowledge, was never an abolition conference. Some of my friends, members of that conference, and themselves decided abolitionists, have complained to me of the action of that body in suspending some young preachers, for their activity in the abolition cause, as flagrantly tyrannical and unjust. The Troy Conference is not an abolition conference, and never was. These, and other northern conferences, have firmly opposed the abolition movement. They have been as a wall of brass to turn back the strong tide, and protect the southern rights and interests.

Ministers and laymen, in some portions of our work, have agitated this question in their conferences and churches, but generally northern Methodists have been opposed to such action. They commonly regard slavery a great evil, though not necessarily a sin; but it would be a great mistake to conclude that the anti-slavery

sentiments of Methodists have been wholly, or mostly, the fruits of Church action or agitation. Brethren fall into a great error in imagining that all the abolition influences abroad in the northern Churches originated in them. On the contrary, our common newspapers, the contests and canvassings connected with our elections, our periodical literature, are rife with abolitionism on other and broader grounds. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that this embarrassing subject is so much discussed at the north; but it is certainly true that Methodists here derive their sentiments chiefly from such sources as I have intimated—from their reading, and from intercourse with their fellow-citizens. They are abolitionists naturally and inevitably, because they breathe the atmosphere of this country—because the sea is open to free adventure, and their freighted ships bring home periodicals and books from all the countries of Europe, tinged, or, if any prefer, infected with these views. The difficulties of this question, then, do not arise chiefly from its relation to abolitionism in the Church, but from the general tone of feeling among the people of the non-slaveholding states. I trust, sir, that in pronouncing our sentiments on the subject under consideration, we shall not regard ourselves as acting for distinct and antagonist interests—that we shall not inquire whether we may inflict an injury upon one portion of the Church regarded by itself, and no doubt justly, as ever mindful of its constitutional obligations, to save another portion from evils engendered in the hot-bed of abolitionism—a part of the Church ever ready to trample down constitutional barriers, and remove old landmarks and securities.

That is not the true issue; for in four-fifths of the anti-slavery conferences, to say nothing of the rest, there have been no agitations, no seeds of abolition sown, but the people have formed their opinions as citizens of the country; and notwithstanding these convictions on the subject, they have as tender a regard for the interests of the Church as any of their brethren. As a member of the New-York Conference, I do most earnestly protest against any declaration which shall go forth before the world, affirming or intimating that the New-York Conference, as such, has at all meddled in this matter, except to prevent apprehended evil, and to perform what it regarded as a pressing, though painful duty to the whole Church. I will only say further, that in our action in the case of a venerable and beloved bishop, we have trouble and sorrow enough heaped upon us—Pelion on Ossa—afflictions on affliction. Let not, then, this drop of bitterness be wrung into the cup which we are compelled to drink. Let it not be said that we are groaning under the pressure of difficulties arising from an agitation which we have got up and cannot now allay. Let it not be said that we are now suffering the consequences of our unconstitutional meddling with the subject of slavery—that the seed sown by us has sprung up, and we are now reaping the harvest. As a delegate from the New-York Conference, I sympathize with its honour; and I declare, before heaven and earth, that it is no fault of that body of ministers that we are now pressed down with such a burden of difficulties. Sir, there are men in this conference who have suffered much in vindicating what they regarded the rights of the south. My venerable friend on my right has, on this account, received great and unmerited obloquy. Another excellent minister on my left, and many more not now in my eye, have been reproached as pro-slavery men and men-stealers for the part they thought it their duty to take against the ultra views and measures that threatened to prevail a few years ago. They have deserved well—I think they have merited the thanks—of southern brethren for their earnest efforts to shield them and their rights against encroachments on the constitution of the Church. Sir, I have done. I do not pretend to have succeeded in making a constitutional argument. My object was to do my duty in stating, as well as I was able, the just and proper grounds of the proposed resolution.

Mr. Drake said, there was no brother from whom he should more expect conciliatory measures than the one from whom this substitute came. He believed that he and the brethren from the same conference were ardently attached to the union of the Church, and doubtless the resolution had been framed with the best intention of harmonizing the brethren. He felt sure that the last speaker had the same feeling in a pre-eminent degree. He (Mr. D.) had also always desired the unity of the Church, and with all his heart he still desired it, nor would he make any suggestion that would injure the peace of the Church. But with all due deference to what had been said, he thought that in no vital principle did the substitute differ from the original resolution, though in the preamble he thought it preferable. But he could not see the difference between the bishop's resigning his office, and refraining from the exercise of its functions, especially as his circumstances are such as he

has no control over, and therefore the request contemplated would be equivalent to a request to resign, to all intents and purposes.

Let them look at the aspect it would have before the southern world. It would of course be saying, that a bishop of the M. E. Church cannot hold office if he hold slaves, the Discipline notwithstanding. The conference would declare that a bishop could not hold his office and his slaves, though the Discipline said he could not free those slaves. There was another view that had been taken by speakers. According to the illustration given to-day a bishop is to be considered in the same light as an editor. Now, sir, (continued Mr. D.,) while I hold the Methodist doctrine that the episcopacy is not distinctly an order above elders, yet I have never learned that the office of an editor is of the same character. An editor holds his office at the will of the appointing power, the episcopacy hold their office for life, or during "good behaviour." Is not this the universal understanding upon the subject? Now to say that we can deprive a bishop of his office, and yet not censure him—to say that we can depose, and yet leave his episcopal robe unstained—is to my mind absurd in the extreme. Sir, we cannot pass this resolution without hanging up Bishop Andrew before the whole Church as having committed a sin either against Methodism or against Christ! And against which has he sinned? Now, according to the exposition of the last speaker, he has not sinned against Methodism, and I have yet to hear that he has sinned against Christianity; so that according to their own showing they cannot punish him without committing an extra-judicial act. Nor can this course be pursued, and the union of the Church be preserved. Bishop Andrew must be continued in the episcopal office, or you certainly divide the Church. I do not say that the south would be seceders; so far as I know the views of the brethren on that subject they would stand on the ground of Methodist principles, and they would not move. But it appears to me, that if the declared sentiments of brethren from the north be the general disposition, there is still a mode by which Bishop Andrew may continue in his office, and exercise all its functions. I claim to be as sincere a Christian, and as strongly attached to Methodism, as any of the northern brethren. A former speaker had said, let them do that which would, upon the whole, be the least evil; and justified the present measure on the ground, that if the south went they would go unanimously, while the north would be broken up into fragments if they were driven away, because of the variety of opinion that prevailed among them. Now we will take for granted all that the brother has said upon the subject, and that Bishop Andrew has committed no sin, which the north acknowledges, and for this would they cut off 450,000 members, and 1,200 preachers!

But suppose there were difficulties, and difficulties there would be I admit, may we not take the ground that if we remain, under the Discipline, even the majority of the members have no power to drive us therefrom? But does the conference suppose that even if they give up this point, the demands of the north will be satisfied? No; for I have heard some of them say, when I asked the question, that this was all they should expect *AT PRESENT*. Why, this means only that afterward they should expect more; and at the next General Conference they will probably come up and demand that no elder who is a slaveholder shall preside, on the same grounds that they now take in reference to bishops. Let the conference now proclaim that to save a schism in the north, they will depose a bishop from his office, and they will have next conference for the same purpose to proclaim that a presiding elder shall be similarly dealt with. Now, if brethren are honest in saying that because Bishop Andrew has to go to the north, therefore there are good and tenable grounds for the passage of the resolution, then I will suggest something which I think will meet the difficulty without violation of the Discipline. The speaker then suggested a resolution to the following effect:—

"That whereas there have been found difficulties of a serious nature in the bishops of the M. E. Church exercising a general superintendency, therefore,

"Resolved, That the General Conference recommend the episcopacy to assign to each superintendent his sphere of labour for the next four years."

This he contended could not be objected to on constitutional grounds, and he had no hesitation in saying that the work would be better done under such an arrangement, the present plan being impracticable in view of the difficulties now pressing upon them.

A member here interrupting the speaker on the ground of order, he said he considered that what he was adverting to had a direct bearing upon the great question before them, and everything that had such bearing he had a right to argue. Something was needed to harmonize the great body which they represented, to enable

them to stand up as one great phalanx. If for this purpose the proposition was worth nothing, let it go for nothing.

Mr. Slicer said that he belonged to the class called conservatives. He would carry out his conservative principles by favouring the substitute. He would go for the substitute for the sake of the slave. It did not concede to the south all that they desire, nor did it concede to the extreme north all that they desire. It occupied the ground which he believed all the conferences south of New-England, and north of Virginia, west of the Atlantic and north of Missouri, could with safety occupy. It was well known there existed throughout the extreme south the most rabid and objectionable pro-slavery sentiments. Men of talents, learning, and reputation at the south were known to entertain pro-slavery opinions, openly avowing that slavery in the United States is a great social and political blessing. Every general superintendent must be as the life-blood of the human system, flowing out with constant vigorous action from centre to circumference, and returning to the centre again with the same vitality, and one might as well talk of bandaging a man's arm, and have him remain in a state of health, as to retain an itinerant general superintendent, and yet have him to remain within a district of the connection. He would not say that no man was to be elected a bishop who was a slaveholder. Whenever the elected delegates of the several annual conferences should deem it desirable to have a slaveholder for a bishop, they would have one, and not till then. There were some men of but one idea—it might be a Miller idea or a morus-multicaulus idea—which affected everything they looked at, so that instead of seeing an object in its relative character and bearings, their whole field of vision was covered with this one idea. This idea of domestic slavery was the chimera, the hobgoblin which troubled so many at the north. For the most part, the presidents of the United States had come from slaveholding states, yet there was nothing in the book of confederation which could be made to say that it is the sense of the American people that nobody is to be a president except a man who comes from a slaveholding state. The speaker would favour the substitute instead of the original resolution, because it was the milder course, and consequently the part of wisdom and prudence. There were various ways in which Bishop Andrew might become disencumbered, and the very moment he became disconnected with slavery the full powers of the general superintendency would inure to him; whereas, if the original resolution was carried, he would be disfranchised without any probability—not to say possibility—of returning to the high duties which he had so satisfactorily discharged since 1832. The speaker, if the circumstances of the case would allow it, would hold up both hands to do nothing in this case, but he was constrained by circumstances, which influence all men, to act. Bishop Andrew had not infringed the Discipline, but he had offended against the great law of expediency. He believed that if the conference adopted the substitute, their action in the case would be almost universally approved. He earnestly hoped the substitute would be adopted.

Mr. Crandall said that the brother from Mississippi stated with regard to the position of the south just what they had expected him to state. Those who were in favour of this resolution had understood the well-defined position of the south from the very commencement of this discussion, and had not supposed that those brethren would move one hair's breadth. And so far they had been true to their position. He (Mr. C.) had not supposed that any advance which the north might make would attract them, but that they would firmly and unyieldingly maintain their ground. He was not quite satisfied with either of the resolutions, yet he could appreciate the motives of the brethren who had presented them, and he believed that it was their disposition to meet the brethren of the south, if they could, on some middle ground. He did not however think the south would thank them for the attempt, since they had there declared that they had gone as far as they could for the sake of accommodation. He thought the first resolution had such a design, though if the vote had been taken on that he should have voted for it. When the substitute was proposed he was about to vote for it but for the unfortunate speeches which had been made.

In reference to what had been said by his highly-respected and learned brother from the New-York delegation, (Dr. Olin,) many things met with his hearty response, but there was one sentiment to which he could not respond. He believed that brother intended—for from his honesty and sincerity he believed him incapable of anything else—to state the true condition of the north, and only failed for want of information. He understood him to lay down the doctrine that the right

of southern brethren, who hold slaves, to their ministerial standing, rested on constitutional provisions of the Discipline. But he did not understand those brethren themselves to base that right upon the constitution of the Church, but on a mere disciplinary provision. From the doctrine of the brother hundreds of ministers and thousands of members differed.

Dr. Olin. I did not say that the north conceded so much, but that I held that to be Methodist doctrine.

Mr. Crandall continued. He regretted that his brother had given such an explanation. He understood him to say that that was his doctrine, and generally acceded to in the north and south, and he made use of the term constitution when he ought rather to have said, by a disciplinary provision not included in the constitution. There were parts of the Discipline which were not the constitution. There was the statutory law, which could be repealed at any time, without removing any of the constitutional barriers. He allowed that the statutory law allowed a minister to hold slaves, but he knew of no part of the constitution which gave them such right.

Dr. Olin. When I used the term constitution, I meant the whole Discipline; what we would call Methodist ground, and not any special or particular part of it.

Mr. Crandall supposed that was the error. There was another thing he wished to name. He understood the brother to say that those who did not agree with him in this view were not worthy to be members of the Methodist Church.

Dr. Olin. I said no such thing, and meant to say no such thing. The brother is hypercritical upon me, and has misunderstood me.

Mr. Crandall thought he was not alone in his view of what the doctor had said, and hoped he would not indulge any unpleasant feeling toward him (Mr. C.) for the remarks he had made. Now if he could be made to understand that the substitute had no loophole, he would vote for it; but he was apprehensive that it might be very difficult, if the brother refused submission until four years more had passed over, to control the matter at all. Now if he could be satisfied about this, he would go for the substitute.

Mr. Cass observed,—Mr. President, if I understand the subject now under consideration it is this: Is it expedient for this conference to suspend Bishop Andrew from his office on account of his being a slaveholder, until such time as he shall be free from this embarrassment? The reason assigned why such action should be had is, that a large majority of the Church are opposed to having a slaveholder for a bishop. Now, sir, I hold if they are wrong, and the bishop is right, no action should be had against him in the premises. This, then, is the question to be settled. Dr. Olin has said that the bishop has done no wrong; but, with all due deference, I must beg leave to dissent from his opinion in this matter. Sir, is there no moral wrong in being a slaveholder? A portion of the north believe slaveholding to be a moral wrong. We have nothing to do with slavery in the abstract; but we believe that slavery, as it exists in these United States, and in the Methodist Episcopal Church, is morally wrong. But, leaving this out of the question for the present, is there no wrong in Bishop Andrew becoming a slaveholder, and thereby disturbing the peace of the Church; and also bringing this dark cloud over us, and this trouble upon us, which has pained our hearts and detained us here for days, when he has brought this evil into existence by his voluntary act, with his eyes open? Sir, I think there must be a wrong in this.

Dr. Olin has said, that the resolution now before us should be so modified as that Bishop Andrew will not be censured. Sir, I hold there should be no privileged order in the Methodist Episcopal Church: if he has done wrong, he ought to be censured. As much as I respect the office of bishop, and the men who fill it, they are amenable to justice if they do wrong as much as I am in my humble relation in the Church; and with as much greater responsibility as their station is above mine. They are the very last men who should not be censured, if in the wrong. Mark this, sir, whenever there is a privileged order in the Methodist Episcopal Church the glory will have departed. Let this not be—no, never.

Dr. Olin says that slaveholding does not disqualify any man for the ministry, provided he live in a slaveholding state; and that the constitution of the Methodist Church sustains him in his position, and those who differ from him in opinion are bad Methodists; and if they persist in these courses, they ought to follow the example of those who have seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Sir, by this one stroke he has severed four conferences from the Methodist Episcopal Church. I do not, however, think he intended to do it. But it was done with his zeal to hold on to the south, which, by the way, he appears to have some sym-

pathy, if not partiality for, as he has been a slaveholder, and never thought it was anything against his ministerial character.

The south say, if Bishop Andrew is suspended, the line of division will be drawn between the north and south, and that when they say this they speak the mind of the whole south. Sir, how do they know this fact? Have they taken a vote in all their annual conferences? or, have they had a convention to deliberate on this matter? They calculate to claim that they are the Church, and the north will be the seceders. This is not the first time we have heard of nullification, or that which is equivalent, (in the Church and state,) from the south; but the world stands yet, and I believe it will not be moved from its foundations if the resolution before us should pass. These threats have their meaning, which is perfectly understood by the north. The south tell us that if the resolution does not pass, the evil done at the north will be far less than the evil would be at the south if Bishop Andrew is removed from his office. They say the northern delegations do not know the minds of the people as to having a slaveholder for a bishop. Sir, have we not memorials from four annual conferences at least, declaring they wish not to have one. The New-Hampshire Conference, which I in part represent, has most respectfully, deliberately, and solemnly protested against having a slaveholder for a bishop. And thousands of our members have also sent up memorials to this effect. Is it true that we do not know the minds of our people on this subject? No, I answer, no. Sir, I tell you that, in my opinion, a slaveholder cannot sit in the episcopal chair in an annual conference in New-England; and if Bishop Andrew holds his office, there will be large secessions, or whole conferences will leave. This is no fiction, nor do I expect it will frighten any one; but I wish the facts to be plainly stated to this body. If this conference does anything less than to declare slavery is a moral evil, we stand on a volcano at the north. Now, as I said in the commencement of my remarks, if the opinion of the north on the subject of slavery be wrong, Bishop Andrew should not cease to exercise his office. But my opinion is, that the north are right on the subject. And as a proof that they are right, I wish to present to this conference the opinions of some eminent men on the subject of slavery. The following is a quotation from the Rev. John Wesley's Works. [Here some one made a motion to adjourn, but the vote was not taken.] The speaker proceeded by saying, They do not like to hear John Wesley speak. It has been stated that he might weep over the Methodist Church in view of the danger of division. Sir, I believe that if it were possible for his spirit to weep, it would weep in view of the connection of the dark subject of slavery—with the Church. Let us hear what he says respecting slavery.

"Men-buyers are exactly on a level with men-stealers. But perhaps you will say, I do not buy any negroes, I only use those left me by my father. So far very good. But is it enough to satisfy your conscience? Had your father—have you—has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, setting Revelation aside, it cannot be that either war or contract can give any man such property in another as he has in his sheep or oxen, much less is it possible that any child of man should be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human being as soon as he breathes the vital air, and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature. Therefore if you have any regard for justice, to say nothing of mercy nor the revealed law of God, render unto all their due. Give liberty unto whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man—to every partaker of human nature. I strike at the root of this complicated villany. I absolutely deny all slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of justice."

The speaker was interrupted by a motion being made that a vote be taken giving Mr. Early liberty to speak after Mr. Cass should close, which the speaker declared to be contrary to all rule and order.

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the conference adjourned, Mr. Cass having the floor.

FRIDAY, MAY 24.

Mr. Cass was recognized by the President as having the floor. He said he had been interrupted in his speech the day before, and his rights had been trampled upon, and he had no further speech to make.

Mr. G. F. Pierce then spoke as follows:—I speak from convictions of duty, and not because I expect to change the opinion of any man before us; nor would I presume, as some have done, that there will be in the course of my remarks the evolutions of any new light. I do not, sir, feel a great deal of solicitude about the

issue of the case, and my solicitude is diminished, because I regard the great question of unity as settled by the previous action of the conference in another case; but I desire to animadvert very briefly on one or two points, as connected with the manner in which the question has been considered.

The brethren who have spoken on the other side of the question, many of them, have adopted a trick of oratory—a sort of legerdemain in debate, which is this; they state abstract propositions of right, which no man will pretend to deny, and then deduce elaborate argumentations, and make them to bear on conclusions with which these conclusions have no more to do than the law of the tides has with the polar star. But the design is very obvious. The idea is more readily adopted—the conviction more readily embraced—because it falls in with preconceived opinions, and long-established prejudices. There is no logical connection between the premises and the arguments which have been advanced here. Things are put in apposition which have no relation to each other. Sir, there has been, in every speech which has been made on the other side of the question, a false issue attempted. Whatever may be affirmed of expediency, and the disqualification of Bishop Andrew for the office of general superintendent, in view of circumstances over which it is declared brethren have no control, it is not to be forgotten or disguised that this is not an abstract, but a practical question, that it involves the constitutional rights and equality of privileges belonging to southern ministers. It is a practical question, too, which cannot be set off from its connection with the past, and its bearings on the future. It is part and parcel of a system, slowly developed, it may be, yet obvious in its designs and unwearied in its operation, to deprive southern ministers of their rights, and to disfranchise the whole southern Church. You cannot take the question out of its relations. It cannot be made to stand as brethren have tried to make it stand, isolated and alone. If there had been no memorials on your table, praying for the establishment of a law of proscription—if there had not been declared, over and over again, a settled purpose, if not in unequivocal terms, yet in unequivocal acts, to work out the destruction of this evil, and free the episcopacy and the Church itself from this evil, the question before us would be different in its aspects, and the action of the south in regard to it might be modified accordingly. I beg this conference to consider this question in the light of its connection with the previous action in the case of the appeal from the Baltimore Conference. Sir, the preposterous doctrine was asserted in that conference, that its purposes and usages are paramount to the law of the land, and the doctrine of that conference has been affirmed here. Sir, the action of this conference on the subject has brought the whole Methodist Episcopal Church into a position of antagonism to the laws of the land. I consider such action not only an outrage on the common justice of the case, but decidedly revolutionary in its movements, and destined to affect, unless repealed, the character of the conference and all the ramifications of the Church. What is the position? The ground was taken there and here,—the Church, the Bible, the Discipline, and the laws of the land to the contrary notwithstanding,—that we have a right to make a man's membership depend upon the condition of his doing a thing which, as a citizen of the state, he has no power or right to do. The act which is proposed in the resolution is part and parcel with the same affair. When Bishop Andrew has been invited to resign or desist from the exercise of his official functions, or is impeached or deposed, it ought to be, and can be, considered as neither more nor less than collateral in its designs and effects with the action of the conference in the case to which I have referred. This is a practical question, make what disclaimers you please, or any amount of them. The common sense of the country will consider it as an infraction of the constitutional, or, if you please, the disciplinary rights of the southern brethren, however it may be considered by those in the so-styled more favored and less-incumbered portions of the Union.

The argument for expediency I am compelled to believe has not half the force assigned to it. I think I speak advisedly when I say, that whatever effect the passing of Bishop Andrew's character without censure, or laying the whole business on the table, might have with the New-England Conferences, I am not prepared to believe that any considerable damage would be done in the middle conferences. I do not believe the people of New-York would decline to receive Bishop Andrew for their bishop. I do not believe that he would be objected to either in New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, or Maryland, or in any of the conferences of the western states. The difficulties are with the New-Englanders. They are making all this difficulty, and may be described in the language of Paul, as "intermeddlers with other men's matters." I will allow, as it has been affirmed again and again,

that there may be secession, societies broken up, conferences split, and immense damage of this sort be done within the New-England Conferences; but what then? I speak soberly, advisedly, when I say, I prefer that all New-England should secede, or be set off, and have her share of the Church property. I infinitely prefer that they should go rather than that this General Conference should proceed to make this ruthless invasion upon the connectional union, and the integrity of the Church. Let New-England go, with all my heart. She has been for the last twenty years a thorn in the flesh—a messenger of Satan to buffet us! let her go, and joy go with her, for peace will stay behind. The southern Church has nothing to fear, and she has nothing to ask on this subject. As far as we are concerned, sir, the greatest blessing that could befall us would be a division of this union. There, sir, at the south, we dwell in peace, and the good Shepherd watches the flock and guards us from all harm. There are no jarring strings, no discordant sounds, no incarnate emissaries of the evil one going about seeking whom they may devour, but there we “lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters.” If we had not the spirit of the Master, if we were selfish enough to enjoy the bounty of our heritage, we would court division, pray for it, demand it.

But, sir, I will present one view of this question which has not been touched upon. Set off the south, and what is the consequence? Do you get rid of embarrassment, discord, division, strife? No, sir; you multiply divisions. There will be secessions in the northern conferences, even if Bishop Andrew is deposed or resigns. Prominent men will abandon your Church. I venture to predict that when the day of division comes—and come I believe it will from the present aspect of the case—that in ten years from this day, and perhaps less, there will not be one shred of the distinctive peculiarities of Methodism left within the conferences that depart from us. The venerable man who now presides over the northern conferences may live out his time as a bishop, but he will never have a successor. Episcopacy will be given up, presiding eldership will be given up, the itinerancy will come to an end, and congregationalism will be the order of the day. The people will choose their own pastors, and preachers will be standing about the ecclesiastical market-places, and when men shall ask, “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” the answer will be, “Because no man hath hired us.” We have unity and peace, and seek it because of its effects on the connection, and I believe, to-day, that if the New-England Conferences were to secede, the rest of us would have peace. There would be religion enough left among us to live together as a band of Christian brothers.

Sir, I object to the substitute for another reason. I would have preferred the original resolution. The substitute presents a most anomalous view of the whole subject. Suppose that view is adopted; what is it? What do you do with the bishop? You cannot put him on a circuit or station: he is a bishop in duress—a bishop in prison bonds—an anomaly—a fifth wheel in the machine of Methodism—doomed to live on the Book Concern, while no provision is made for his rendering the Church any service—if this resolution is adopted.

I promise not to detain you long, for others are wishing to speak; but I felt that I could not go home satisfied unless I took this occasion to make a few remarks. If I did not know there were others better qualified to defend this subject, I would trespass on the patience of the conference by the hour. I tell you that unless Bishop Andrew is passed free of censure of any kind, the days of Methodist unity are numbered. What do brethren mean when they come here and eulogize him as they have done? It has been avowed that he is a blameless man, pure and spotless—that he has high executive talents—that he is one of the most efficient administrators of law—that he is as well qualified for this as any of the worthy men who occupy the episcopal bench. Yet in the face of this is the conference to come out and say, that on the question of expediency he shall resign, refrain from the exercise of his office, or be deposed? What mean these eulogies? Are brethren in earnest? Is the conference heaping garlands on the victim they destine for slaughter? Has it come to this, that a large body of sober and reverend men, in the face of their own acknowledgment of blamelessness, are going to inflict one of the severest penalties on an innocent, unoffending man? Why will you blight with a breath the bliss of this worthy man? Will you offer him up to appease that foul spirit of the pit which has sent up its pestilential breath to blast and destroy the Church? You have unchained the lion, and now that he is raging and roaring for his prey, you select a venerable bishop—one of the ablest and best of the whole college—to immolate him on the altar of this Juggernaut of perdition!

Think you that we will sit here and see this go on without lifting a voice or making a protest against it? Are we to see this noble man sacrificed for the sake of New-England? God forbid it! God forbid, I say, and speak it from the depths of my heart.

Brethren may say what they please, disclaim what they please, eulogize as they will, they cannot make anything of this but the deprivation of a constitutional right. In the case of the appeal from the Baltimore Conference many voted, not because they believed the conference had done right, but for extraneous reasons; but in this question the vote goes out upon its naked merits, irrespective of any disclaimer or acknowledgments that may be made in reference to the bishop's rights, character, or capacity. But to come to the point—Has he a right to hold slaves under the Discipline of the Church? If he has, I adjure you not to lay violent hands upon him. If he has, I ask brethren to pause and say, if in the prospect of facing a scrutinizing world, they can go out with the stinging recollection in their hearts that they have sacrificed a man worthy to preside over them, to the restless demands of an arrogant and insatiable spirit of abolition? I do hope brethren will pause before they drive us to the fearful catastrophe now earnestly to be deprecated, but inevitable if they proceed.

Dr. Longstreet spoke as follows:—Before I proceed to address myself to the motion which is now before you, as it is the first time I have addressed you, and in all probability will be the last—for whether you stand bound together or not, to the best of my solemn convictions, at this time, I never shall mingle with you again—permit me to drop one word. The history of all churches has been much the same. Christianity, imitating her great Head, has gone forth with the benign principles of the Prince of peace, reckless of the civil relations of men, and has scattered her principles abroad with their soul-healing influence, to root out all the evils in the world. And so long as the Christian religion kept within her appropriate sphere she accomplished wonders. Heathenism went down before her. The religion of the world, backed by civil power, strengthened by the civil arm, crumbled into dust; temples, and idols, and philosophical systems, before the meek and lowly man of Galilee, all fell to the ground, as if by magic power. But, as the number of Christians increased, it became necessary that they should organize themselves, in order that they might, in a more systematic form and phalanx, war it for their Master against the world, the flesh, and the devil. They formed what you are in the habit of calling the Church—that is, a body corporate; though that was not the Church of old. The Church of old were those men who united in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ; and to ascertain who possessed the proper character, the heart was looked to, not the confession of faith. They had few and simple rules. Afterward the Church formed ecclesiastical assemblies, who soon began to use their authority—to incorporate human instrumentalities and human laws with the divine law, and the consequence was speedily seen.

I have not time to consider, nor will your patience bear me through, what was the history of the Romish Church from its beginning; suffice it to say, there is not a dogma, not a monstrosity or pretension of the Church, or of any of its officers, which now startles your common sense, which had not the minority pleading against it with all the energies and power that a holy religion, combined with stirring eloquence, could exert; but they were put down, and you saw in a very short time a race rising up—fulfilling the prophecy of Scripture, to be sure—which claimed first supremacy as bishops, next supremacy over bishops, next supremacy over sin, next supremacy over hell, and last the prerogative of the Deity himself; and they had the sanction of ecclesiastical authority in all their pretensions: the consequence was, piety in a very short time declined; the Church negotiated the affair of salvation for penitents, and exacted, of course, a reasonable reward for this reasonable service: and there to this day stands St. Peter's, the wonder of the world for grandeur and magnificence, built by means of cruel exactions, under religious enthusiasm, from the poor and the needy that bowed at the foot of the cross.

Now, if you believe, my dear brethren, that you are made, apart from grace, of any sterner or purer materials than were the original elements of the Papal Church, you mistake yourselves. Human nature, except just so far as the pure principles of the Gospel have changed it, is the same in all conditions; and I could read you a lesson—I shall in part—from your own records here, that will show you that you are as rapidly in the wake of that very Church as ever a people were on the face of the earth. My alarms were, that from the rapid growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church you would wax proud and forget the humble origin

from which you rose to power, and that you would begin to exert that power by attempting to reform the Church; by putting down those who have one recommendation that the Saviour gave—that they cast out devils in Jesus' name—at least; and I beg you to remember, as I pass along, that while you are deposing a bishop you calculate not—no human wisdom can calculate—the extent of the mischief you are doing to a world lying in wickedness. I have ever feared that you would begin to presume on your authority and power to operate reforms, not by the simple, blessed principles of the Gospel, but by your ideas of what will best conduce to the general interests of Methodism. What is Methodism? If it be anything else than the pure Gospel religion, let Methodism go upon the winds far from my sight. And, sir, one of you who occupy places behind me, and I hope will die in peace in the possession of your office, may remember the motto which I hung out upon my banner when first I joined the Methodist Church. Never will I give my consent to test rules, either as to the qualifications of ministers or the rules of ordination, other than what we originally had when Methodism first took root in our land. And, I venture to say, sir, that had you stricken out one half of your rules here that do not touch the great question of a man's qualifications in the sight of God for his duties, you would have relieved yourselves from a great deal of trouble which now seems to be pressing upon you. Your rules about slavery have constituted you a high court of judicature of the country, and made you judges of all the statute laws of the states; and now whether you are to decide these questions in the Annual or General Conferences, or whether the bishop himself has the prerogative of settling them, is not yet decided; and you are all at points, and will remain at points, as long as you legislate on this subject; hence I shall protest against your test rule as to temperance, and your requiring men to go through a course of study before entering the ministry. If you ask why, I shall say, I am disposed to let good enough alone.

Let us consider the question calmly. There is no bitterness in my heart toward the most uncompromising abolitionist in this assembly. It may be we are in fault. The truth is between us somewhere: let us see where it lies. It is a matter of vast importance, because you know not the ultimate issues of the matter now before the conference. The world should know how we stand. When Methodism first made its appearance among us, she found slavery overspreading the whole length and breadth of the land. She entered her protest against it, and in so doing she did more than our Saviour or any apostle ever did. Our ideas of it now are not drawn from any express precept, but from a train of logical reasoning on general principles. The Methodist Church went beyond anything that is to be found within the lids of the Bible. We of the south, however, submitted to it. We did not invoke the power of the Church to put down slavery. We did not invoke the civil power to put it down. The Methodist preachers in the south commenced as the disciples of old, rooting out strife and sowing the seeds of virtue. And how beautifully would these things have operated whenever left to their own action! The slave loves his master, and feels gratitude swelling in his heart. The master loves the slave. They stand in the relation of benefactor and beneficiary, and they go forth in love and harmony, and as I have often seen them uniting hand in hand, and with a freedom which you would hardly think could exist, give themselves to the service of the great Head of the Church, to whom we are all, I trust, slaves. It was not long, however, before the Church demanded of us submission to another rule: it is this: "When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

To every exaction on this subject which you have made of us we have yielded; yet our concessions excite no commiseration, no kind feelings. You yielded nothing in these things, brethren—you of the north—and perhaps you did not know how much we have yielded, or to how great censure we have exposed ourselves by yielding: but the matter is not ended yet. Every conference for ten years past has been oppressed with petition after petition on the subject. They have been respectfully referred to committees, who reported that they were applying to a jurisdiction which is incompetent to give relief. They are told this again and again, yet again and again we are told that they must be treated respectfully. It is done. At length, by a train of circumstances, he who occupies one of the first places in the conference, finds himself connected with slavery: when he reaches here, he finds the conference in commotion; he is pained and agonized. He convenes

franchisement of all southern ministers! *The ultimate design!* Really, sir, this is extraordinary sagacity! If he had been content to show us what was the legitimate result of our action, we must have corrected him, or submitted. But since he has thought proper to declare our *design*, we must demur. We have serious doubts as to the competency of any man to tell our designs, unless we avow them. Disfranchise all southern preachers! I disclaim it, sir. In the name of the Troy Conference, which I have the honour in part to represent, and in the name of the whole north, I disclaim it. I appeal to you, brethren, every man of you, to know whether you have ever known of any such idea at the north. I am fully sustained; no such thought can be in existence. But the argument by which my respected friend sustained this extraordinary proposition was not fully developed. If he will have the goodness to give his attention to see whether I do it correctly I will state it for him. The north are not willing that a slaveholder should be a bishop; *ergo*, they are determined that no slaveholder shall be a minister! If the brethren of the south have any argument to support this doctrine of universal proscription, this certainly must be it. But is it legitimate? Is there any connection between the antecedent and the consequent—the premises and the conclusion? I cannot see it. The Discipline prescribes the circumstances under which a travelling preacher may hold slaves. But does it say anything of circumstances under which a bishop may hold slaves? Certainly not; for the condition of a bishop is widely different from that of any ordinary travelling preacher. He is really and truly the pastor of the whole Church, and slavery will not allow him to be so.

Brethren talk of the infringement of their constitutional rights. But what do they mean by it? That *any man* has a constitutional right to be a bishop! Such a right as he had to graduation from a probationer to elder's orders! Has any man living such a constitutional right to be elected to the episcopal office, or remain in it after he is elected? I never heard of such a thing. Sir, there is no constitution in the case. Neither the Discipline nor the General Conference has ever said what special qualifications would, or would not, be required in a bishop. It is true, sir, that the Discipline nowhere says that a slaveholder *shall not be a bishop*, and I should be sorry if it did. It has nowhere said that a *rum-drinker* shall not be a bishop: and yet, surely, no man would say that this was any the less an utter disqualification for the office, because it was not so declared in the Discipline. (I beg, Mr. President, you will not understand me to compare slavery with rum-drinking. I mean no such thing. I introduce it only for purposes of illustration.) No, sir. There are no *constitutional rights* invaded. As to whether a man will do for a bishop, or not, the General Conference is the sole judge, either as to his election, or retention; and their judgment will have its true expression in the ballot box. A constitutional right to be a bishop! You might as well talk of a constitutional right to be an editor or a book agent, or any other General Conference officer.

But the brother from Georgia says this measure will not save us from secessions. We shall have secessions in New-England! We shall have them everywhere! What can be done to satisfy New-England? Sir, as the name of *New-England* struck my ear I felt a thrill of the most intense interest. But, the reverend gentleman proceeded, "they are busy bodies in other men's matters! A thorn in the flesh! A messenger of Satan to buffet us!" And, alluding (as I understood him to do) to a certain movement in New-England, and certain principles upon which that movement was based, he called it "the foul spirit of the pit! The Juggernaut of perdition!" &c. Upon this language, Mr. President, I may not remark! I must, of necessity, leave it without animadversion! But with the utmost respect, this dear brother will excuse me for saying I much prefer the terms used by some of his highly-respected associates. I like the chaste and beautiful language of the sweet-spirited and eloquent Mr. Crowder, and the dignified and forcible style of the reverend gentleman who last preceded me. I must say, Mr. President, I deprecate the use of such language in a controversy of such solemn importance—a controversy invested with more elements of moral grandeur than any which has engaged the attention of the American people for half a century! I hope the brother will not use it again, and certainly not on the floor of this General Conference. But my friend from the Georgia Conference says, "Let New-England go! I wish in my heart she would secede! And joy go with her, for I am sure she will leave peace behind her!"—Let New-England go? I cannot forget this exclamation. It vibrates in my soul in tones of grating discord. Why, sir, what is New-England that we should part with her with so little reluctance? New-England! The land of the pilgrims—the land of many of our venerated fathers in Israel—the land of Broadhead—of Merritt—of the revered man [pointing to George

Pickering] who sits by my side, and a host of worthies whom we have delighted to honour as the bulwarks of Methodism in its early days of primitive purity and peril. Let New-England go? No, sir, we cannot part so easily with the pioneer land of the devoted and sainted Jesse Lee!

But, Mr. President, our brethren of the south utterly mistake the truth in this matter! Why, sir, they can't get half way to New-England in this war! They must wade through numbers and forces of which they never dreamed! They must encounter us in the centre, whose opposition to slavery is uncompromising. And Baltimore (honour to her self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of humanity!) will be a formidable obstacle in the way of their advance. But if they ever should subdue us, and reach the land of the pilgrims, rest assured, sir, they would find there a wall of brass which would remain for ever impregnable to the assaults of the slave power! We are happy that New-England is with us to a man in this fearful conflict—that the united west, and north, and east, form an insuperable barrier to the advance of slavery! O sir, I fear me much our brethren at the south are deceiving themselves in this matter. This has never been a question of *principle* between us and New-England. We have always been agreed in fundamental anti-slavery sentiments, and I am the more careful to allude to this, because, so far as I remember, it is a distinction that has not been made in this discussion. It has been purely a question of *measures* between us. In this, it is true, we have differed, but in opposition of principle to slavery, north, east, and west, we always have been, and I trust shall ever remain, inseparably united. We resist *as one man* the advancement of slavery, which, not content to be confined within its own geographical limits, threatens to roll its dark waves over the north. *It claims the right to give us a slaveholding pastor! a slaveholding bishop!* Do not then be surprised that we are so perfectly united in asking to be set back exactly where we were a few months ago. O, sir, that our brethren could roll the wheels of time back to where they were last November, when we had, comparatively, no difficulties to encounter! But this they cannot do. What less, however, can they expect us to ask, than that they should do what is equivalent to it, give us our bishop without the slaves?

My brother, sir, judges about as poorly of the principles and condition of the north as I should of the south; for I have never been to the south. I am sorry I have not. I should like to strike the hands of these dear—very dear brethren, whom I have learned to love upon this conference floor, as I never should have supposed possible, at their own dear homes. I should like to go there, sir, if I might, my anti-slavery principles to the contrary notwithstanding! [Cries of several voices, "Come on—come on—we shall be glad to see you."] Let New-England go! No, sir, never. And here I beg to say, that our southern brethren can't induce us to use such language with reference to them. They can't provoke us to it, sir. Let the south go! No, sir, we love them too well. We love them for their goodness, and respect them for their talents. We love them for their stern unbending regard to principle and adherence to Discipline. We love them for their conservatism, ultra sometimes though it may be, we love them for it. Let the south go! No, sir, we cannot part with our brethren, whom we love so well. True, we cannot compromise principle, to save *them*—nor to save the east. But we need not. They are too magnanimous to demand it. We shall live and die with them—we *will not let them go* unless they tear themselves from our arms bedewed with the tears of affection. *Never! no, never!*

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the speaker closed his remarks for the present, with the expectation of resuming the subject on the morrow.

SATURDAY, MAY 25.

Mr. J. T. Peck, who was on the floor yesterday at the time of adjournment, being in order this morning, rose and said:

Mr. President,—It would have been agreeable to me if I might have concluded my remarks yesterday, without interruption; but the arrival of the hour for adjournment compelled me to leave the argument in an unfinished state. Much as I regretted this, however, I should have preferred, if my friends would have allowed me to do it, to have left it there. To this, it is due to myself to state, I could not get their consent. In obedience, therefore, to a judgment to which I always feel bound to defer, I resume the floor to-day.

"Ten years from now, and our glorious general superintendency, and our time-honoured itinerancy will have expired!" So says the prophecy of yesterday! *Only*

ten years will suffice to pull down this beautiful edifice, and annihilate the very materials of which it is constructed! The strong confidence it has inspired in its votaries—the ardent attachment of those whom it has saved—the profound admiration which its almost supernatural wisdom and adaptation have gathered around it, from all classes of people—all these *cannot save it*. It is doomed, and fall it must! Only ten years, and the last flickerings of this once brilliant and glorious light will have died away in the socket! But, Mr. President, as I am but a child in these matters, and so have seen but little of the secret workings of small, but mighty agencies, upon the basis of this noble fabric, I am curious to inquire into the cause of this prophetic fate. What is it that is to work such devastation and ruin to the fair heritage of God? Let this *reason* stand out in bold relief, stripped of all its drapery, where we can see it just as it is. This is certainly no time for rhetorical ornament. At a time when interests so vast and solemn are pending upon the action of a single principle, let that principle be exhibited, naked and unadorned, that we may not mistake it. What then is the *cause* that is destined to effect the overthrow of institutions venerable with age, and potent for the amelioration of the condition of man? Why, sir, if I have not mistaken it, it is simply this:—

This General Conference is likely to say that a slaveholder cannot be a bishop!

Look at it, undisguised, and alone, as it is. Examine it carefully, in all its dimensions and bearings, and see if you can discover any adequacy in the cause to produce the predicted effect. Can it be that the Almighty arm will be withdrawn from beneath us for this? That we shall be abandoned to destruction for the want of a union between slavery and the episcopate? What element of our purity and primitive simplicity will it destroy? What adaptation of our noble system will it annihilate, to have no slaveholding bishop? Will God, indeed, be angry with us, and leave us to ourselves *for this*? Is this the foundation stone of our spiritual edifice, that it must inevitably crumble to ruins when it is removed? If God should forsake us, we *are* ruined—irrecoverably ruined! But, sir, *I cannot believe he will*. He has not in former times, and we have been without a slaveholding bishop for sixty years! The grand itinerant plan of publishing salvation to the perishing world has gone on gloriously, dispensing its invaluable blessings to almost every land, notwithstanding. Now, I know, sir, if I were reasoning of a *man*, and were to say, He *has* not forsaken us, therefore he *will* not, that I should be justly chargeable with the legerdemain in debate which my friend from the south so gracefully ascribed to us yesterday. But, sir, when I say it of the unchangeable God, he *did* not, therefore, in the same circumstances, he *will* not, I feel myself fully sustained. No, Mr. President, I cannot adopt this dismal prophecy. It has too much of the air of romance about it. If nothing more is justly laid to our charge than the simple refusal to depart from our former state in this matter, I verily believe the everlasting arms will be underneath us still. The wheels of the itinerancy will continue to roll on, and the ages of the future will yet exhibit the now undeveloped power of this wonderful plan.

I will now, sir, ask attention to what appears to me to be a very singular, and yet very frequent exclamation from southern brethren, and I do it not in the spirit of casuistry. They, almost to a man, call upon us to *pause*! “Pause!” say they, “we beseech you; pause before you advance another step!” Indeed, sir; this is a very extraordinary prayer under the circumstances. My neighbour moves his fence, and barn, and house on my farm! and when I begin to insist upon his taking them off, he cries out, *Pause*! “Pause, sir, I beseech you! Your measures will be productive of immense injury to yourself and me!” What, sir, should I say to him in this case? Why, sir, can any one doubt that I should instantly reply, This is the wrong time to call for a pause? The time to pause was when you began to make your arrangements to move your buildings on my land! *Then*, if some kind friend had called out to *you*, in the language you address to *me*, it would have been exceedingly relevant. But now, from the very nature of the case, *there can be no pause*, until you retrace your steps, and relieve my premises of your effects. Need I make the application of this homely illustration? I am sure I need not. It is obvious and necessary. But I shall not fail to look well to the only hinge upon which this argument turns. The great question is, Who has been the aggressor in this case? (I use the term in no bad sense.) Upon whom rests the responsibility of the present fearful issue? Does it rest upon us of the north? Does it rest upon this General Conference? I verily believe it does not, sir. When, or where, may I be allowed to ask, have we infringed the rights of our brethren at

the south? It is true, we have laid our petitions at your feet. But in this have we done anything more than to exercise the natural rights of freemen? The citizens of this free republic must be allowed to petition, and we must receive their petitions, respectfully expressed, and give them the consideration which their nature and importance demand. Petitions have been presented to you, sir; petitions, to be sure, which, from the state of the public mind in which they originated, have required careful analysis; but many of which have deserved a most patient hearing. But, sir, what have we done? What single decision of this body, since this excitement commenced, has not been adapted with singular care to the interests of the south? Nay, sir, we have cautiously guarded the south, in every official act that looked toward this exciting subject. We are aware that it is a perfect system of sensitiveness—a complete bundle of nerves! And we have always acted with this fact fully in view. Indeed, sir, I am honestly in doubt—and I know my brethren of the south will allow me to express it—whether we have not more reason to ask the pardon of the east than of the south in this matter? This I will not, however, attempt to decide, because it is unnecessary. But, sir, the question returns, Whence is the origin of our present difficulty? Does it come from the north? Certainly not. Have we originated this innovation? I need not answer. I ask, then, most respectfully, When was the proper time to pause? This question brings us no relief. *It is too late*, and I will not repeat it. But surely the call to pause will be suspended by our brethren of the south, until they have put themselves right in regard to the question at issue. If it be inquired where the blame is located, since we will not allow it to rest upon the north, I answer, *I locate it nowhere*. Indeed, I will not talk of blame. It can do no good. The question is one of remedy. We cannot fear that we shall be blamed for pressing the question of remedy. It ought not to be asked of us, that we should be satisfied to have the bishop of the whole territory trammelled by peculiar and local institutions. It is not necessary for the good of that part of the work where slavery exists, and it must, from the very nature of the case, be ruinous to that large part of it where it does not exist.

But, Mr. President, I am exceedingly thankful that there is one common ground to the south and north. Not, perhaps, to the whole south, but to many of its most distinguished men—I refer to the magnanimous concessions which have been freely made upon the election of a slaveholding bishop. It has been conceded, with a frankness and Christian candour which deserve, and shall receive our highest praise—not, indeed, that no slaveholder should be eligible to the episcopal office—for our southern brethren talk with precision on this difficult question—but that it was inexpedient to attempt an election on any such ground. In the very style of considerate northern men, it has been urged in the south that the bishop is the officer of the whole Church, and it is not advisable to trammel him with a local difficulty. It must not be a question of north and south, but simply who is the best man for the office. Where is the man of God upon whom it will be safe to devolve such a fearful responsibility? This is noble. But will our southern brethren abide by this principle? I am aware that I have no right to charge the necessary correlate of an acknowledged sentiment upon an opponent, unless he avow it. But it is my right to show what is implied in that sentiment, and what results necessarily follow it. And I will ask brethren, What objection have we to the election of a slaveholding bishop? None, surely, but what is based upon the idea of having one. Why do we at the north object to electing a man in such circumstances to the episcopacy. For no other reason in the world than that we have no use for him when he is elected. He cannot be a true Methodist itinerating superintendent. No, sir, it is not to electing, but to having one that insuperable objections arise in the minds of northern men. Need I apply these remarks? Can brethren fail to see that nothing more is needed to relieve us from our present difficulties, than the legitimate action of the principles universally claimed by the north, and so extensively conceded by the south? No, sir, let it be distinctly borne in mind that the vote upon the present resolution must depend upon precisely the same principles as the vote for an election. We grant, it is a much more delicate matter; so much so, indeed, as to almost appal the stoutest heart; but the principle is the same and the action must be the same.

But, Mr. President, there is, I must say, one attitude taken by my brethren from the south to which I find it difficult to reconcile my feelings. It is, I confess, a matter of extreme delicacy for me to allude to it; and yet I know I shall have the indulgence of southern brethren. If I had ever had any doubts in regard to southern

magnanimity, they would have been removed by what has taken place on the floor of this conference during this discussion. They do not condemn a man for speaking his sentiments out fully. No, sir. I doubt not, that, if I were to appeal to my reverend friend on my right, (Dr. Smith, of Virginia,) to whose eloquent remarks we have so frequently listened with the most intense interest, he would say, "It is cowardly and mean for a man to shrink from an honest and frank avowal of his opinions and feelings upon a question of such magnitude as this for fear of difference with those who had other opinions and other feelings." I will therefore mention that subject, with which my mind has been burdened and afflicted for several days. Connected with the arguments of our southern brethren, there is constantly held up before us the *idea* (I will not call it menace) of a *division* of the Church, if we persist in our course! Do not brethren know that, by this course, they throw a fearful difficulty in the way of a free and safe discussion of this subject? an impediment almost sufficient to drive us from its discussion altogether? I know our dear brethren cannot fail, upon the mere mention of this matter, to think of the results which may follow to the interests of their flocks and charges in the south. I know very well that they do not feel themselves at the disposal of good men and Methodists in this thing—that it is in the power of wicked men to break up their missions, and destroy their usefulness—and they are not at liberty to be reckless of results. But can they not waive their *discussion*, at least for the present? It is enough, sir, to chill the blood of any man to look these difficulties in the face as they are presented by southern brethren. It is almost enough (but I thank God not quite enough) to make us forego a great principle to relieve ourselves from the responsibility of deciding the case. I will therefore ask it as a favour to Methodism, that this great and intimidating question of *division* may be allowed to sleep a few days, till we can talk over the great principle at issue. I dread, I confess to you, sir, to approach the question with such a fearful contingency suspended, *in terrorem*, over my head. Division of the Methodist Episcopal Church! It frightens me to think of it. I am compelled, however reluctantly, to admit in my own mind, that there is fearful truth in the hazard to our nation, to which brethren refer, in such a result. Divide the Church just as we are rallying our energies to prosecute with united power our missionary labours! just as we are about to combine our strength for the purpose of efficient action in the great cause of Christian education! Divide the Church at a time when most of all the great principle of Methodistic unity is indispensable to form an insuperable barrier to the advance of Roman Catholicism, which threatens to throw its withering blight over all that is fair and lovely in this glorious republic, and menaces the very frame-work of our political freedom! O no, sir; it is *here* that I would call upon brethren to pause. Again, I entreat, hush this frightful dream to sleep, that we may calmly study, undisturbed, the merits of the question between us.

I must, Mr. President, notice one thing more in the remarks of my honoured friend from Georgia, and then I must leave him; for then I think he will admit that I have given him at least a respectful degree of attention. He anxiously inquires what we are to do with Bishop Andrew, if he should resign his episcopal office. He would be a *fifth wheel* in Methodism, an anomaly, and an inoperative member! This, Mr. President, is really strange. An elder in the Church of God—a man of unbounded popularity—a man of ardent piety and gushing sympathies—with the whole south before him, in every part of which he would be hailed with acclamations of joy—and where more work will crowd upon him than any two men can have strength to perform—*nothing to do!* A fifth wheel in the ministry! it must be impossible, sir, for a man to be serious, in such an attempt to create a difficulty. But, sir, we have been asked, what do we mean by our eulogies of Bishop Andrew? The tributes paid to his character have been described in the beautiful rhetoric of my friend from Georgia, as garlands decking a victim for the sacrifice. Really, sir, this is very extraordinary language. Is it strange, that as we feel ourselves compelled to lay our hands upon his official relation, we should think it proper to disclaim any attack upon his Christian and ministerial character? Is it not due to him, and due to us, to disavow any want of respect or affection for the man? Indeed, sir, our brethren have mistaken the bearing of our allusions to Bishop Andrew's worth altogether. This is one of the most trying aspects of the case. 'Tis for this very reason that we deserve the respect and sympathy of both friends and foes. How, I ask, could we more clearly exhibit our regard for a great principle than to refuse to allow even the exalted virtues and worthy character of Bishop Andrew to divert our attention from it? Sir, this is what in everything else the world calls moral

heroism, and we deserve respect, and not reproaches for it. It is the worth of the man, as well as the exalted character of his office, that overwhelms us with grief, at every step of our progress. It is a mournful task, and if at any time during this discussion there has been manifested, anywhere, a disposition to levity, I regret it, sir; it pains me beyond measure to see it, when our business is characterized by the deep-toned sorrow of funeral solemnities!

I cannot here avoid an allusion to a remark of yesterday, from the Rev. Mr. Longstreet, though I adhere to my purpose not to reply to his speech. He found the community of New-York charged with sympathy for Bishop Andrew. It is undoubtedly true, sir, and I should be grieved if it were otherwise. The generous sympathies of noble hearts in our crowded gallery, and rear, and throughout this community, find a most sincere and hearty response upon this conference floor. I would not for the world dry up this crystal fountain or divert it from its legitimate channels. The rev. gentleman is correct in regard to the facts, but he has misinterpreted them. He has imagined that these genuine pulsations of nature rise up in rebellion to us, and yield to the demands for a slaveholding bishop. No, sir, he is greatly mistaken. I beg to assure him that a greater error could scarcely have been committed. These are the sympathies upon which we cast ourselves for support, in this trying crisis. It is this that secures to us, as well as to our afflicted bishop, the prayers and the tears of the noblest men and women of which human nature can boast.

Perhaps I ought to apologize, sir, for the warmth and emotion with which I defended New-England yesterday! It was the land of my sire. There repose the ashes of my fathers back to the earliest generations of this land. It is the birth-place of at least two of our venerable bishops, who, thanks to Providence, are with us today—of our honoured Olin, and venerated Bangs. It was the land of the sainted Fisk. And never, while our moral heavens are radiant with the glories of this luminary of the Church, shall the fair fame of the land that gave him birth be aspersed. *Peace to his ashes, and honour to his memory.* He was a good, and a great man—one of New-England's proudest sons. Let me here only say, sir, that from this same land are rising up now a host of strong men, who already stand forth as champions in the fearful conflict with sin. How can I speak otherwise than *warmly*, when reproach has been heaped upon a land that has furnished so many of the brightest luminaries of the Church?

Sir, I have done. I thank you, and I thank the conference, for the indulgence I have received. Sure I am that I have not deserved it, and I feel my obligations of gratitude the more. I embarked in this noble "ship" when I was but a boy, and I cannot be persuaded to leave her. I like her form, her structure, and her machinery well. I like her passengers, her officers, and her crew. I like the sea on which she sails, and the port to which she is bound. True, she is exposed to storms, and may sometimes stagger beneath the beating tempest, and reel amid the engulfing floods. And at such a time be not surprised if the signals of distress be heard—the life-boat launched, and numbers, forsaking her in fright, commit themselves to the merciless waves. Other craft, of sprightly form and splendid sails, may heave alongside, and invite us aboard. But, sir, do not be in haste to go. Look well to her ballast and build, for I fear she is too crank and loose to survive the perils of this frightful sea. No, sir, let us stay on board the "old ship." Sunshine or storm, darkness or light, I see her riding safely on the waves—triumphing over every danger—and gallantly bearing her precious burden toward the haven of rest. In every gale that shall strike her, as she is proudly careering amid the raging elements, my voice shall be heard above the noise of wind and wave, in the words of the dying Lawrence, "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP!"

Mr. Pierce rose to explain, and said he should be very glad to reply at length; but as he spoke by courtesy and not by right, he would confine himself to explanation. He observed he was exceedingly startled at the proposition of brother Peck, that a bishop had no constitutional right to be a bishop. He had always understood that when a man is legitimately appointed to office, he has a constitutional right to that office for the whole term—that he cannot be ejected unless he has been in fault. As to the perhaps unfortunate expression which he yesterday made use of toward New-England, some apology might be due; but, on the whole, he would not regret it, as it had afforded his honoured brother such a theatre for displaying his peculiar talents. He intended to say that for New-England to secede, or to be set off with a *pro rata* division of the property, would be a light evil compared with the immolation of Bishop Andrew on the altar of a pseudo expediency.

He meant that the loss of New-England was as the dust of the balance compared with such a gross, palpable, unjust, outrageous violation of law. He intended to convey the idea that the great Head of the Church did not require the sacrifice of an innocent and unoffending man for the sake of maintaining peace and order in the Church. The Church required no such sacrifice for her unity or her character. As to the unkind epithets to which the brother had referred, he wished to be understood, not as having applied them to New-England, but to abolition and its misguided abettors. If all New-England was engaged in this unhallowed war on the south and on southern institutions, then he meant New-England; if not, he would be understood otherwise. He intended no disrespect or injustice to New-England. He would cheerfully acknowledge, because he honestly believed, in accordance with the views so eloquently expressed by the brother who had preceded him, that there were many noble sons from New-England. As the last speaker had referred to Bishop Soule, he (Mr. Pierce) hoped he should be permitted to say that, from his father's representations, he had learned to admire him before he saw him, and acquaintance had ripened admiration into reverence. There was an honoured representative of the New-York Conference, (Dr. Olin,) who favoured the conference with his opinions a few days ago, whom he had loved from his early boyhood, and never more than now; and he took this occasion to assure him, that whatever might be his vote on this trying question, he would still remain enshrined in the fervid affections of a heart too warm to speak prudently on an occasion like this.

And, sir, I recognize you (addressing Mr. Peck) as a man with a soul in your body, warm, generous, glowing. I admire your spirit—your genius. The beauty of the bud gives promise of a luscious blossom—the early beams foretell a glorious noon. And now, sir, though my speech shocked your nerves so badly, I trust my explanation will not ruffle a hair upon the crown of your head. [A burst of laughter, Mr. Peck being very bald.]

Mr. Green arose and said,—Mr. President, I have several times, since the pending of this subject, felt myself almost entirely cut off from the privilege of speaking, particularly, sir, when the senior bishop said that he hoped that we should hear from men of age and experience—men with gray heads, and that the younger men would listen; which was, no doubt, good advice. But, from some subsequent remarks, the way has been opened again; and you will permit me here to say, sir, that though I am not yet gray-headed, I claim to be among the fathers of the Church. I belong, sir, to an ancient stock. My father was a Methodist for forty years before I was born, and his house was the home of an Asbury and a M'Kendree; and when I left home, I left with the blessings of a mother upon me, who was a Methodist, likely, before any person on this floor was born. I have myself been a member of the Church for nearly thirty years, and twenty years of that time I have been a travelling preacher, and have done a year's work every year. I have been in several General Conferences before, and have never troubled you with my speeches; but the time has come when I must speak out. I claim, sir, to be a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church; not of the southern Methodist Church, nor of the northern Methodist Church, but of the *Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America*. I am just as much a Methodist preacher as any other man; anything that any man may be in the north, or middle, or southern portion of the work, as far as Methodist doctrine or discipline is concerned, I claim to be.

You will allow me to say a few words with respect to a division of the Church; and on this point permit me to be a little desultory. I am not very subject to excitement, embarrassment, or alarm, nor am I disposed to be an alarmist. I have been among savage men and savage beasts; but for the last few days I have entertained feelings of alarm which I never felt before, and I hope in God I may never feel again. I have an identity with the Methodist Church which connects itself with all the interests of this life and that which is to come. My family, my earthly possessions, every thought, every hope and fear, are bound up in her. I have done little else but serve her, and never felt like being anything else but a Methodist preacher. I could not aspire to anything higher or more ennobling. I would not descend to anything lower. Sir, I have felt myself growing proud of Methodism, not in the common acceptance of the term, I trust; but I have realized a feeling of exultation, gratitude, and delight, producing in me a disposition to praise and glorify God for the result. When I have seen *our Methodism*, our beloved Church standing out in all her beautiful proportions—when I have heard statesmen and rulers declare that Methodism is the cement of the government—that ours is the system which is to evangelize the world, and that Methodist preachers are the workers in

the vineyard of the Lord, and have looked forward to the time when she shall be what she ought to be;—when I have looked at her as a mighty ship, well rigged and richly laden, standing before the breeze, moving onward swiftly and smoothly toward her destined haven, I have felt my heart within me swell with joy and gratitude; but for the last few days I have seen her reeling beneath the storm, shipping heavy seas, and driven from her anchors. My heart quailed as one forced by a tempest, and my whole soul felt as though it was put down with an iron nerve. I cannot help it. I have prayed to God to avert the threatening danger. I hope he will; yet it is hope against hope, made up mainly of desire, with a very lean supply of expectation.

Now, sir, I notify this audience, and especially this conference, that I am no orator. I wish I were. Neither shall I attempt to follow the learned brother who was last up in all his excursions. I shall leave that to some brother who may follow me. I am no professor, no president of a college, no doctor, but simply an humble Methodist preacher. Neither am I a lawyer, and shall not, therefore, trouble myself with the technicalities of law. I profess, however, to understand something of the moral law, of right and wrong, and of our book of Discipline. I claim, also, to be a philanthropist; for I never saw the man or woman yet who was not either my father or my mother, or my sister or my brother. I have taken a course, with respect to the difficulties before us, which I am not certain will meet the views of all of my friends from the south; yet my object is to do some good, if it is in my power. I have been published in my own country as a peace-maker; and I glory in making peace, when it is in my power to do so. When I find myself at variance with any one, my first object is to get as near to him as possible. It is too often the case, that when persons get at variance, they occupy ground as remote from each other as possible, as though this would give some advantage of leverage; while my plan is, to get so near as to grow together again, and if that can be done, all will be well. I have, during the pending of this subject, transferred myself the best way I could to the north; and have acquainted myself, as well as I could, with the thoughts, feelings, and circumstances of my northern brethren, that I might not do them injustice. While, on the other hand, as I have settled myself in the south, and laboured there almost all my life, I cannot but understand something of the circumstances peculiar to that portion of the work. I have informed myself the best I could on the subject of abolitionism itself. I have read their papers, kept up with the reports of the West India islands, looked into the history of the Wilberforce and Sumner colonies; but the question is not so much whether the movements of the abolitionists are right or not; for, if I understand the question before us, it is this: Whether or not we, as a General Conference, have the right to depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church for having become connected with slavery, the constitution and Discipline of our Church being judge?

I think, Mr. President, that the position of Dr. Bangs, with respect to our episcopacy, and others who have spoken on the subject, is wrong. If not, I must confess that I have always been in error; the Church at large is in error; and I must confess that the argument which they have adduced to sustain their position has utterly failed to produce any change in my views on the subject. Now let us examine their position a little. They say that a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is nothing more than an officer of the General Conference; having received his appointment from the conference, and being merely an officer of the conference, that the conference has the right, when they shall judge it expedient to do so, to divest this officer of his office, without even the forms of trial. Now, sir, this is strange doctrine to me; to place a bishop on the same ground precisely, with respect to the tenure by which he held office, with a book agent, an editor of a newspaper, or the secretary of your conference, if you please. Now let us examine this a little. In the first place, an officer of the conference is elected for a certain length of time, or number of years. Not so with a bishop—he is elected for life, or during good behaviour. An officer is not degraded by being removed from office, from the fact that it is expected, when placed in office, that he will be sooner or later removed; not because he will be objected to in his official or moral character, but because his term of office will expire, and then the choice of the conference may fall on another brother. Not so with a bishop: his term of office is to end only with life, if he should continue to travel, unless he behave badly. Can we say, sir, that all the officers of the conference who have been in office, and are now out of office, have either laid down their office by resignation, or have been deposed? I reckon not, sir. Yet that is the only way, it seems to me, that a bishop's office can be disposed

of, while the man holding the office shall continue to live. When we make a book agent or editor, do we make him say that he believes that he is moved by the Holy Ghost to take on him the office of book agent or editor? No, sir. But we do a bishop when he is ordained, and we set him apart to the work by the imposition of hands. Will any brother say that this consecration is nothing more than a solemn mockery? I hope not. When a book agent or editor becomes old, or in feeble health, do we make him a superannuated book agent or editor? Not so, sir. But when once a bishop, whether able to do the work of a superintendent or not, always a bishop. I consider, sir, that a bishop is only the officer of a General Conference simply in the character of a chairman. He is not the officer of the conference, but of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

We will now notice this expediency a little. It is said we are not going to depose Bishop Andrew; we are going to take a milder course—we are just going to require him to *desist* from the exercise of his office. If he is worthy to hold it at all, he is worthy to exercise it. But I want it perfectly understood that, though you may call the dose that you are making up for Bishop Andrew by any name you please; you may put it up with nectar, and in the most beautiful form you can; you may mix water with it, and for a moment deceive the taste, by a little acid on its edges; yet if Bishop Andrew has to swallow that dose, its taste will bring about his episcopal death. I had rather die in a decent manner, to be sure, than to be butchered and mangled, yet I am not the less dead because the means used to bring about the consequence seemed to be mild. But to the expediency. There are some things which are expedient. It is expedient, in the first place, that, as we have a Discipline of the Church, which contains the doctrines, constitution and laws, which we are to believe, and by which we are to be governed, that we should stick to that little book. Now, sir, will any brother point me to the law that Bishop Andrew has violated? It cannot be done; and upon the Discipline of the Church I take my stand, and say, that with that book governing us, we have no right to depose Bishop Andrew. But, it will be said that circumstances have come up which make this course expedient. What is the circumstance? Is it a part of Methodism that requires it? *No, sir!* Methodism has not done this thing. But there are a great many who believe, that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church ought not to be connected with slavery. And what have we to do with what people believe? That is not the rule by which we are to be governed, particularly when their notions come in contact with our book of Discipline. The propriety of the act of deposing Bishop Andrew has been illustrated by various supposed cases. Brother Bangs asked, if Bishop Andrew had married a coloured woman—made a disgraceful connection by marriage, if the General Conference would not act right in deposing him from office, by a vote of the conference? Another brother asked, if a bishop were to become a rum-seller, if we would not have the right to depose him? and many other like suppositions have been made. Now this argument is lame, from several considerations—exceedingly lame; and I am truly astonished that such arguments should have been advanced, particularly when I remember the sources from whence they came. I could not, I am sure, have expected such an argument from Dr. Bangs. In the first place, the evils in the supposed cases would have affected the Church alike in all places; and the remedy would be alike felt in all parts. But the main point of pertinence lies here. If the Discipline of the Church had made provision for the marrying of a coloured woman, and the selling of rum, under certain circumstances; and a bishop had married a coloured woman, or sold rum, under the circumstances provided for in the Discipline, then it would have been unjust and extra-judicial to have deposed a bishop for such an act. But it is said that Bishop Andrew was elected because he was not a slaveholder; and that as he has now become a slaveholder, he ought to be put out of office. Well, sir, I hold that we have no right, according to our book of Discipline, to consider the holding of slaves, where the slaves are held according to the provisions in that book, as in any sort disqualifying a preacher for the office of bishop.

I am not certain that a slaveholder could not have been elected bishop at the conference of 1832. We came within one vote of electing such a one at one time; and I am inclined to think, if we had in the south united on Dr. Capers, we could have elected him in 1832. Be that as it may—Bishop Andrew was not consulted on the subject—no one asked him if he was a slaveholder or not; and had you required him to say before he was ordained, that he never would become a slaveholder, and refused ordination unless he would have so promised,

he never would have been ordained. It is evident to me, if brethren thought at all that he was elected with such views and understanding as would lay him liable to such a relation, for it was understood his family were to live in the south, it being believed that the residence of the bishops should be so situated as best to suit them, and the work which they had to do; and any man living in the south is all the time liable to become a slaveholder, and that too sometimes without his knowledge or consent, as was the fact in Bishop Andrew's case, in the only instances in which he can be called a slaveholder. I am truly astonished at the brother who yesterday seemed so firmly of the opinion that no man could make him a slaveholder. It really seemed to me that the brother was perfectly blind, for he threshed and sledged away upon the chains of the slave, as he supposed, when every link he struck, if the blow could have any effect at all, would but tend to swell the heads of the rivets that bind their bands upon them. Now I think that a man may become a slaveholder without his knowledge or consent; and there are cases where it is a virtue, instead of a vice, to hold a slave. Let me give you an instance. On my return home, on a certain occasion, in opening my drawer where I kept sundry documents, one of the first papers that struck my eye was a bill of sale of a negro man to myself, made by an old gentleman in the neighbourhood. I asked how it came among my papers, and was told that it was brought and left for me in my absence. After some time I learned these facts. An old coloured man in the neighbourhood, and a preacher at that time, having enjoyed a great many privileges in the way of travelling about, and preaching and acting for himself, because of the lenity of his master, became fearful that his master, who was very old, might soon die, and he might fall into the hands of some one who would not give him so many privileges, and as he was compelled to belong to some one, since he could not obtain his freedom in the state, he consulted a brother who lived in the neighbourhood with respect to the best course to be taken in such a case; and, believing that I would never curtail the old man's privileges, the deed was made to me. I have never seen the original owner since; and I have not seen the old black man but once. He does nothing for me, of course; his object in becoming my slave legally was, that he might be permitted to do as he pleased, and have some one to protect him. Now, sir, would it not have been a sin in me to have refused to retain this man? I could have gotten clear of him by re-conveying him, by giving him away, or by selling him; but would not that have been inhuman and unkind in me? There is a difference, sir, between a man holding slaves, and slaves holding on to a man. Some masters hold on to their slaves, while slaves, at other times, hold on to the masters, or owners. The latter is Bishop Andrew's case, as I understand. He never wanted a slave—never bought a slave; and is not, in the true sense of the word, a slaveholder. Now let us examine the facts in the case a few moments, with regard to the slaves owned by his wife. He does not own them now, neither did he ever own them, strictly speaking. From the time he was married, until he made a deed of trust to his wife, he was, according to law, their legal owner; but the transfer that he made of the slaves, after marriage, was but the carrying out of an understanding that existed before his marriage; hence the language that the bishop holds in his communication to us on this point: "Not wishing to become their owner, I made this deed of trust," &c. Bishop Andrew never assumed any moral obligation with regard to these slaves, but leaves them belonging to the same person, and under the same circumstances in which he found them; and cannot, therefore, so far as any connection between him and these servants is concerned, be considered a slaveholder. In the case of the girl, who was left to him by an old lady's will, she was to be free after she became seventeen years of age, if she preferred it, and was to go to Liberia; but the girl, after all the persuasion that could be used, refused to go—refused therefore to be free. The bishop was compelled to retain her, or permit her, as a slave, to fall possibly into worse hands, and consequently a worse condition; yet the bishop tells us that she is at perfect liberty, at any time she may choose, to go to a free state, or any place where she can enjoy her freedom. In the next place, as to the boy, who descended to him at the death of his late wife, he tells us that he is ready at any time to give him up, whenever provision can be made for him to be taken care of, and protected in a state of freedom. Now, sir, I would ask these brethren, whether or not they consider Bishop Andrew, in the sight of God, a slaveholder? I think, sir, they will be constrained to say he is not. But suppose he is a slaveholder, yet the laws of the state in which he lives will not allow emancipation—and the provisions of the Discipline protect

him while in that situation. And how dare any brother lay his hands upon him? But it was said by my good brother Peck, who was last up, that to connect slavery with episcopacy was moving the fence upon their ground; that is, the south was moving the fence upon the ground of the north. Now, sir, I would like to know where that fence is. I have never seen it—it is not in the Discipline, I am certain. There is no fence through Methodism. There is a fence around it—but none running through the Church; and if these brethren are for putting up a fence, running nearly through the centre of the Church, with the bishops all on one side, I go for pulling it down, sir. Methodism is a unit: she has but one heart, and one soul. * I, as a Methodist preacher, claim all the ground—have a right to put my plough anywhere. I think I can find a better metaphor. It is this. Our fathers built a house for the family before we were born. In that house there are four doors—one to the east, one to the west, one to the north, and one to the south—I shall we their children rise up and say that the southern door must be filled up; and if it is not done, they will do what? Leave the house? No, sir, but that they will turn you out? Now, sir, although the southern door is not much used, yet we are not ready to have it closed. No, sir, we protest against it.

Mr. President, to have an extra-judicial action on the mere ground of expediency, what would such a precedent be likely to result in? What might not be plead as expedient eventually? It might soon be thought expedient, that all preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church should unconditionally free themselves from slavery. For if the bishop, who belongs to all the preachers, should be free from slavery, will it not soon appear necessary that the preachers, who belong to the bishop, should all be free from slavery, in order that he may make them available to himself, so that he may send the preachers into all parts of the work, as may best suit his views and wishes? Will not this soon be urged from the fact, that preachers living in the free states may have difficulty in putting up ministers to preach who hail from slaveholding conferences? It is dangerous and ultra to put expediency above law. Now, sir, allow me to ask, if this conference have the power, taking the Discipline as our constitution and charter, to elect a slaveholder to the office of a bishop? I suppose every brother on this floor would answer that we could. Now, sir, I ask, in the name of common sense, since we can legally place a brother in the very situation in which Bishop Andrew is placed, can we now punish Bishop Andrew for being in that position? *Put that down, Mr. Reporter.*

Here I will introduce another point. It has been asserted again and again, that it has always been the opinion of the Church that a slaveholder should not be a bishop. Will you permit me to refer you to the opinion of one man at least on this point? Were I to ask who stood highest among the apostles of Methodism in the United States of America, I suppose Bishop Asbury would be first named; next, no doubt, would be Bishop M'Kendree. A clearer head and a purer heart than his I never knew. It was my privilege at one time to be his travelling companion, and his life was the best comment on the Christian religion I ever saw. I hung over him in his dying hours, and snatched from his lips the motto, "*All is well.*" He was a diamond of the first water, and his robes were pure and clean as the mountain snow. Well, sir, what were his views on this subject? Judge ye when you hear this fact. He had at one time determined to buy a black boy to wait upon him, and was dissuaded from doing so by E. Boddie, Esq., of Sumner county, Tennessee, and myself, on the ground that, if the boy belonged to himself he would not obey him more readily than if he belonged to another. Sir, shall we wake the ashes and invoke the spirit of this sainted man of God, and establish an inquisition, and call up the fires of the slave torture, and by an action *ipso facto*, consume his robes? Ah, sir, I feel that we have fallen upon evil days! It has been asked, Mr. President, what harm it would do to us in the south? Well, let me tell you what I think the effect will be. Suppose Bishop Andrew be deposed, and we from the south tamely submit, how could I return to my work and put my head out of the top of a pulpit, and attempt to preach in connection with such action? If Bishop Andrew be deposed, and the south were to submit, that is, the preachers in the south, to such an unjust and extra-judicial proceeding, it would disable the preachers in such a manner that we could not serve our people, and it is very certain that those who deposed him could never supply the place, so that it would leave the whole south without a pastor, and in a state of anarchy and ruin.

There is another point I would have you notice here. Suppose a brother voting

to depose Bishop Andrew was to be elected to fill his place, and go south to attend our conferences, and we were to sustain him, and thereby the action of this conference in deposing Bishop Andrew; I do not know, sir, but the people would rise *en masse*, and escort us out of town in a genteel dress of tar and feathers. No, sir, Bishop Andrew must not be deposed: I, for one, will contend against it as long as I can stand, and when I can stand no longer, I will sit and contend, and when I can sit up no longer, I will lie down and struggle against it. You may take away my hands and my feet, and you may take out my eyes, but when you come to my heart, to the vital spark, I must say, Hold! hold!!

Sir, the question is, how can this matter be settled? There are difficulties to the north, and, as far as I can learn, I am willing to give them every advantage, without destroying the south. If this conference were to rescind the "Few resolution," we could stand that; and the decision in the Baltimore case will not destroy us quite; and I suppose when we shall come to the election of bishops, that they will select brethren from the non-slaveholding conferences. Now, sir, while every action of the conference, where the legal power to act is annulled, having gone in favour of anti-slavery, is that not enough to entrench them from the attacks of abolition? I should think so. It is no small matter with the south, that none of our southern preachers can be elected a bishop. Yet I would not think for a moment, sir, that any man from the south wishes to be elected; we will not fall out with you because you dare not elect a brother from the south, but we will never submit to the doctrine that it shall not be done. I never shall want to go to the legislature; I do not even vote, sir. Yet I felt a degree of mortification when the state in which I live admitted into her constitution an article which says, no minister of the Gospel shall be eligible to a seat in her legislature. We have given up all that we can yield: let no brother ask me to do more. When I have looked upon that brother, (Bishop Andrew,) and remember that in the south his name is enrolled above all our names, that there are hundreds in heaven who have gone thither through the instrumentality of this man of God, and the thousands now living who are ready to stand up and call him blessed, and when I have heard brethren on all sides profess their love and veneration for him, and frankly declare that he is no sinner, that he has violated no law, and that he is a good man and true—and yet striving to pass this resolution, I feel as though they said, and with propriety, "Here, take Bishop Andrew and crucify him, for I find no fault in him." God save us from such a course! Sir, I am done.

Dr. Bangs rose to correct a mistake, which he considered the last speaker had made. He did not make the comparison to which that speaker had made allusion. A bishop was a bishop, and not an agent of the General Conference. But he believed that, inasmuch as the General Conference had created him, they have power to depose or suspend him for just cause.

Mr. Green said, he might have been mistaken in regard to the brother who uttered the sentiment. He would simply say he had heard it from the speakers opposed to himself.

It was moved that the vote suspending the rule confining the speakers to fifteen minutes, be taken off. Considerable debate arose.

Dr. Capers was strenuously opposed to the motion. He hoped the discussion would be entirely untrammelled. It was due to the Church and to the country that the north should give the south the benefit of some strong reasons, at least, in favour of the great question before the conference.

Mr. Early hoped the gentleman would withdraw the motion. The longer the subject was dispassionately and respectfully discussed the better. Many who at the commencement had apprehended evil, had been relieved by the discussion; and many minds, now overwhelmed with fearful apprehensions, might be relieved by further discussion. Let northern and southern brethren exchange sentiments, and advocate the principles they profess, and let the world understand the ground on which they stood, and the principles on which they acted.

Mr. Porter also opposed the motion. He said it could not have escaped the attention of any one that the south had been extolled to the very heavens in this discussion; so that if the half which had been affirmed of her be true, God had not another such a class of beings in his universe. On the other hand, New-England had been traduced, vilified, ridiculed, and insulted, in language too disgraceful to be reiterated on the floor of the General Conference, yet not a man had raised his voice in her defence, save one, and he had retracted to-day what he had said in her behalf yesterday.

Mr. Collins interposed to say that he thought his brother had entirely misappre

hended the remarks of brother Peck in relation to New-England. He felt it due to brother Peck to make this explanation, as he was not then in the house.

Mr. Porter believed that brother Peck had it in his heart to love New-England; but he had apologized this morning for his warmth of feeling yesterday, not because New-England was entitled to respect, but on the ground that it was the birth-place of himself and other men in the Church. He considered New-England worthy of a better defence, and expressed a hope that the motion would not prevail until her sons could be heard. He himself wished an opportunity to speak in her behalf.

Mr. Slicer said, he took occasion to remark, when it was proposed to suspend the rule limiting the speakers' time, that we should be led into difficulty. If the conference must sit there till every brother could make a speech just as long as he pleased, they should inevitably be there till the 4th of July. Some of the members were already sick and asking leave of absence, and he feared that by and by, when the business of the conference was to be transacted, a quorum could not be obtained. The rule had been suspended to give the south, which was in the minority, a full chance to be heard. Several days had already been spent on this question, and three-fourths of the time had been occupied by the south. If members were to sit there bandying compliments back and forth, and giving all the details of their personal history, from childhood up, they should be utterly killed.

Messrs. Collins and M'Mahan were strongly opposed to the resolution.

Mr. Randall thought the speakers should be limited as to time. If their speeches were intended for effect elsewhere than on that floor, they had better write them out and publish them, and not compel the conference to hear them.

Mr. Sovereign hoped the brethren would not get excited. If this question were hurried to a decision, great dissatisfaction would prevail all over the country. He desired the conference to allow the utmost latitude of debate.

The motion to restore the rule was laid on the table, and the conference adjourned.

MONDAY, MAY 27.

Mr. Hamline said,—I do not rise, Mr. President, with the hope that I shall "communicate light" on the topics before us; but rather for the purpose of imploring light from others. It cannot be unkind in me to suggest that this discussion has taken an unprofitably wide range; for many whispers within the bar, and the complaints of several speakers on the floor, show that this is the case. We have drawn into the debate many questions which have but a very slight connection with the propositions contained in the resolution. I would, if possible, call the attention of the conference from matters so remote to the real issue in the case. It is complained that we seem to have forsaken all argument, and a call is made for our "strong reasons." We ought, indeed, to argue on both sides. And if I should not do it, I will, at least, refrain from addressing a word to the galleries, or to the spectators.

There ought to be two questions before us. *First. Has the General Conference constitutional authority to pass this resolution?* Second. *Is it proper or fitting that we should do it?* The first question should be first argued; but so far it has scarcely been touched. If we have not authority to pass the resolution, to discuss its expediency is surely out of place; for it can never be expedient to violate law, unless law violates justice. I shall leave the question of expediency to others, or only glance at it; but I ask your attention to the topic of conference authority.

The resolution proposes to suspend the exercise of a bishop's functions on a certain condition to be performed by him. If I mistake not, the resolution is a *mandamus* measure. Its passage will absolutely suspend the exercise of the superintendent's functions, until he complies with the prescribed condition. The measure of power required to do this is the same which would be requisite to suspend or depose a bishop for such reasons as the resolution mentions, or in other words, for "improper conduct." Have we, then, such authority? I shall assume that we have; hoping, if I *prove* nothing, to provoke proof, *pro* or *con*, from the brethren who surround me.

I argue this authority in the General Conference, first, *from the genius of our polity on points which the most nearly resemble this.* Strict amenability in Church officers, subordinate and superior, is provided for in our Discipline. From the class-leader upward, this amenability regards not only major but minor morals—not only the *vices*, but also the *improprieties* of behaviour. The class-leader, by

mere eccentricity, becomes unpopular in his class. The pastor at discretion removes him from his office. The exhorter or unordained local preacher proves unacceptable, and a quarterly conference refuses to renew his license. The itinerant pastor is not useful in charge, and the bishop or the presiding elder deposes him from his charge or from the pastoral office, and makes him an assistant. The presiding elder impairs his usefulness on a district, not by gross *malleasance*, but by a slight *mifeasance*; or oftener still because "he is not popular," and the bishop removes him to a station or a circuit, and perhaps makes him an assistant. I speak not now of annual appointments, when the term of the itinerant expires by limitation, but of removals by the bishop or the presiding elder in the intervals of conference, which always imply a deposing from office, as well as a stationing act. In all these instances the manner of removing from office is peculiar. First. It is *summary*, without accusation, trial, or formal sentence. It is a ministerial, rather than a judicial, act. Second. It is for no crime, and generally for no *misdemeanour*, but for being "unacceptable." Third. Most of these removals from office are by a sole agent, namely, by a bishop or preacher, whose will is omnipotent in the premises. Fourth. The removing officer is not legally obliged to assign any cause for deposing. If he do so, it is through courtesy, and not as of right. Fifth. The deposed officer has no appeal. If indiscreetly or unnecessarily removed, he must submit; for there is no tribunal authorized to cure the error, or to rectify the wrong. But we believe that there are good and sufficient reasons for granting this high power of removal to those who exercise it. It promotes religion. It binds the Church in a strong and almost indissoluble unity. It quickens the communication of healing influences to the infected and the enfeebled parts of the body ecclesiastical. In a word, it is a system of surpassing energy. By it executive power is sent in its most efficient form, and without loss of time, from its highest sources or remotest fountains, through the preachers and class-leaders, to the humblest member of the Church. The system is worthy of all eulogy.

We will now inquire as to the bishop. In his case is this strong feature of Methodism lost sight of? Is he, who can at discretion, by himself or by his agents, remove from office so many, among whom are thousands of his co-ordinates or peers, subject in turn to no such summary control? We have seen that to lodge this power of removal in superior, and impose submission to it on inferior officers, is the fashion of Methodism. She loves the system. She carries it up through many grades of office until we reach the bishop. Does it suddenly stop there? If so, on what ground? I can conceive none. If any can, let the reasons be arrayed before us. I can perceive none, Mr. President, *in being*; but I can conceive them possible under given circumstances. In Church and in state there must always be an ultimate or supreme authority, and the exercise of it must be independent, so far as systematic responsibility is concerned. But is the episcopacy in regard to this question supreme? Certainly not. The General Conference, adjunct in certain exigences with the annual conferences, is the ultimate depository of power in our Church. And I beg to dwell here. For, in the second place, I shall argue our authority to depose a bishop summarily for improprieties morally innocent, which embarrass the exercise of his functions, *from the relations of the General Conference to the Church, and to the episcopacy*.

This conference, adjunct (but rarely) with the annual conferences, is supreme. Its supremacy is universal. It has legislative, judicial, and executive supremacy. Its legislative supremacy consists of "*full powers to make rules*," as the Discipline words it. This is full power for *quasi legislation*. Under self-assumed restrictions, which are now of constitutional force and virtue, (especially as they originated in a General Conference, composed not of delegates, but of travelling preachers,) it can make *rules of every sort* for the government of the Church. The restrictions are few and simple. They embrace our articles of religion, the ratio of representation, the perpetuity of episcopacy, and the general superintendency, the general rules, trial by committee and appeal, and the avails of the Book Concern. Beyond these slender restrictions, its legislation is legitimate and conclusive; and within them it is so, if the members of the annual conferences are consenting.

Now, Mr. President, in legislation the bishop has not only peers, but more than peers. In clerical orders every man on this floor is his equal, but in legislative functions, his superior. Can you contribute the uplifting of a hand for or against a conference act? You may not do it. The Discipline, which we shape at pleasure, defies your touch. You may not, in this regard, breathe upon it. You may not

spread the plaster upon a patch which we, *ad libitum*, apply to its weak parts. If the conference, by a tie, fail to do what is desirable to be done, and (like the philosopher's starving brute, caught centrally between two heaps of hay) cannot escape from the dilemma, I believe it is doubted by the college of bishops whether the president can come to our rescue by a casting vote.

This conference has *judicial* supremacy. It is a court of appeals beyond which no parties can travel for the cure of errors. It is the dernier resort, not only of appellants, but of original complainants. You, sir, must stand or fall by its sole decision. If it err, which is not a legal presumption, its unwholesome error is incurable, except by the *vis medicatrix*—the medicinal virtue—of its own judicial energies. Nor has a bishop part or lot in its court action. He is constituted the judge of law in an inferior tribunal, but not here. His lips are sealed in this august body, and except when himself is concerned, he may not rise as an advocate either for the Church or for an implicated party. It would be treason to do so. It would be a most offensive deed, like the bribing of a judge, or a *covinous* communing with a jurymen. So naked, sir, of judicial prerogatives is the bishop in this conference. Every member on the floor wears the ermine, which you may not assume. Each of us blends in himself the functions of both judge and jurymen, to which you are an utter stranger. And in the mean time you are liable, as I suppose, to be stripped by us of those other high prerogatives of which, by our countenance, you now hold investiture. You see, then, that as a bishop you are both elevated and depressed. In regard to legislative and judicial prerogatives, when you went up you went down. Your station in the General Conference is a peculiar eminence. Your high seat is not at all terrific in concealed, or overbearing power. It is like a gallery of disabilities, where, as a spectator of tragedy, you can do little more than admire or reprobate the piece, and smile or frown upon the actors. But, sir, such as it is, you and we approve it, and you would be as unwilling as ourselves to see your prerogatives changed by increase or diminution. You are high up, and low down; and all (but yourselves most of all) are content that we—as we mean by grace to do—should keep you up, and keep you down.

But from the legislative and judicial functions of the conference, I proceed to its *executive* or *ministerial*. Here I may be approaching debatable ground. But as I wish to provoke truth, and gather instruction from others, I will venture to advance, leaving, if you please, a bridge of retreat, if hemmed in at last, to that discreet refuge. All will consent, I suppose, to the doctrine of conference supremacy in the two points stated above. They will grant that this is our ecclesiastical legislature; and the high court—*curia maxima*—of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

But has it also *executive* functions—and are these supreme, or all-controlling? So I affirm; but it is for argument, and not with the least design to utter a mere proverb, or to impose my dictum on the conference. I beg all, sir, to hear and remember this emphatic disavowal. I proceed then to argue, (having affirmed it as a mere logical formula,) that the General Conference is clothed with supreme executive functions. I will strive both to sustain it, and to commend it to your favour.

First, then, the General Conference is the *fountain* of all official executive authority. It is the "*Croton River*" of that system of executive ministrations which flow in healthful streams throughout our Zion. I know, sir, that between this fountain and the Church members, who are the remote points of minute distribution, there are interposed several reservoirs of this ministerial authority. The episcopacy is one and the chief reservoir. The pastorship is another. The class-leaders are the small channels through whom passes to the door of each one's heart in the class room a measure of the disciplinary influences of the Church. What is objected, sir, to this view of the subject? Will it be disclaimed that the conference is this fountain? Can you advise me where else than here executive authority takes its rise? Whence do you gather these life-preserving waters? From the constitution? That, sir, is a very brief instrument, and its provisions can be scanned in two minutes. Show where its authority creates the machinery of a Church administration. Does it provide one wheel or spring? It seems to me, sir, that like God in Eden, who planted but did not till the garden, resigning that delightful task to man, so our constitution says to this General Conference, Under such and such restrictions you are commissioned with "*full powers to make rules and regulations for*" cultivating the fields of Methodism. Full powers for what? For two things. First "to make rules." That is legislation, sir, as it

stands related to other powers of the conference. But is this all it can do? No. It has full powers also "to make *regulations*" for the government of the Church. What is a regulation? To appoint a preacher to a field of labour is a regulation. To remove him to another field is a regulation. To elect and impower a bishop to do this for us is a regulation. To recall that bishop to his former station is a regulation. Now "what a man does by another he does himself" is a maxim in law. The General Conference may make these regulations without a bishop and leave him a less onerous superintendence, or the conference may make these regulations by a bishop, and multiply the toils of his superintendence.

That the conference has executive authority is indisputable. For the bishop derives his authority from the conference. Are not answers first, second, third, and eighth, to question third, in section fourth, statutory provisions? Do they not convey authority to the bishops? If those answers were blotted out by a resolution of this conference, would the bishops proceed to execute the duties therein prescribed? This General Conference clothes them with these powers; and can the conference convey what it does not possess? Can it impart to bishops what was not inherent in itself up to the time of conveying it? The conference has these powers. Everything conveyed as a prerogative to bishops, presiding elders, preachers, &c., by statutory provision, and not by the constitution or in the restrictive rules, was in the General Conference, or it was mockery thus to grant it, and the tenure of these officers is void, and their *seizin* tortious. They should be challenged then as to their authority. Now, sir, all that this conference can confer, it can withhold. And whatever it can confer and withhold, it can *resume* at will, unless a constitutional restriction forbids it. It can resume then all the powers granted to a bishop by its own act, except such prerogatives as are essential to episcopacy and superintendency. As to the episcopacy, which we may not do away, the power to ordain is essential to its being, and whether, so far as *it* is concerned, the whole of section fourth, with that exception, might not be constitutionally expunged, is doubtful. Not that I would have it expunged. But I am now arguing the question of conference power, and not of ecclesiastical expediency. I love the episcopacy just as it is; and reverence for the office emulates in my bosom a sister passion—affection for the venerable men who occupy it—affection for them all; *every one*.

Here, Mr. President, let me say a word concerning our Church constitution. It is a remarkable instrument. It differs cardinally from most, or all civil constitutions. These generally proceed to demark the several departments of government—the legislative, judicial, and executive—and, by positive grant, assign each department its duties. Our constitution is different. It does not divide the powers of our government into legislative, judicial, and executive. It provides for a General Conference, and for an episcopacy, and general superintendency. It leaves all the powers of the three great departments of government, except what is essential to an episcopacy, &c., in this General Conference. It restricts us slightly in all our powers, but not in one department more than in another. Under this constitution the conference is as much a judicatory as a legislature; and it is as much an executive body as either. What is there in the constitution to distinguish the three departments of our governmental authority, or to bestow one and withhold another? The grant of power to us is *in mass*, and no more excludes the executive than it does either of the sister departments. And that our powers are administrative do we not declare, when we demand at each General Conference the minutes of every annual conference, and by the "Committee on the Itinerancy" inspect and pass judgment on them? And when, too, the administration of our bishops is put under a severe inquisition, and a committee reports approval or disapproval? Surely, if anything could, this proves that the conference assumes to be supreme in administration, else why does that administration thus appeal to this conference in the last resort? Why, sir, the streams of these administrative acts took their rise here, and, like running waters to the ocean, they return hither to their source. How unlike those of the President to the American Congress, with which I have heard them compared, are the relations of the episcopacy to this conference! The constitution of the United States gives Congress *its* powers, and the president *his*. Each exists independent of the other. The term, the duties, the privileges of the president are all fixed by constitutional provision. The presidency, as an office, and the incumbency of it, are plainly designated. Our Church constitution recognizes the episcopacy as an abstraction, and leaves this body to work it into a concrete form in any hundred or more ways we may be

able to invent. We may make one, five, or twenty bishops; and, if we please, one for each conference. We may refuse to elect another until all die or resign; and then, to maintain the episcopacy, which we are bound to do, we must elect one, at least. As to his term, we may limit it at pleasure, or leave it undetermined. But in this case is it *undeterminable*? Certainly not. The power which elected may then displace. In all civil constitutions, as far as I know, not to fix an officer's term, is to suspend it on the will of the appointing power. Cabinet ministers and secretaries are examples. No officer as such can claim incumbency for life, unless such a term be authoritatively and expressly fixed upon.

I now reach a point of my argument to which I solicit particular attention. It has been urged privately, by very many, that we have no authority to displace a bishop, except for crime and by a formal trial. And they who advocate it tell us to look into section fourth, page 28, and we shall be convinced. Well what now is section fourth to us, in a question of this sort? That whole section is statutory. Were it a part of our Church constitution, it might be invoked as authoritative. Mere rules as they are, and alterable by us in ten minutes, by two conference votes, they expressly recognize our authority to "expel a bishop for improper conduct." Why then urge anything in the fourth section against this pending resolution? If there were no express rule for deposing a bishop, we should still be competent to depose. And for this plain reason. Whatever this conference can constitutionally do it can do without first resolving that it has power to do it—without passing a rule into the Discipline declaring its authority. The power of this conference is derived, not from its own enactment, but from the constitution. Is there anything in the restrictive articles which prohibits the removal or suspension of a bishop? This will not be pretended, and of course nothing in our own statutes can deprive us of powers conferred on us by the higher authority of the constitution.

Let me explain. Suppose Congress should, under the pressure of any causes, calculated to blind or confuse it, deny its power to raise revenues for the support of government, would it be bound by its own act? The very next day it might proceed to exercise the self-prohibited power, and for this reason—the prohibition is by Congress, but the grant of that which is prohibited is by the constitution, which is binding on Congress, in despite of its own opposing action. So with this conference. Suppose the fourth section provided that this body "has *not* power to depose a bishop for improper conduct, if it seem necessary." We should still have power to depose, because the *constitution* confers it, and that is paramount to all our resolutions and statutes. We cannot by our enactments divest ourselves of constitutional powers, no more than man made in God's image, and about to inhabit God's eternity, can spurn the law of his being, and divest himself of free agency and immortality.

Now let me proceed after the manner of mathematicians. We have seen, if I mistake not, that a provision in the 4th section, page 28th, declaring our incompetency to depose, would still leave us free to do it, because the superior authority of the constitution confers the power. Much more then may we depose if, instead of a statute forbidding it, the Discipline is silent on the subject. But much more still may we depose, if instead of silence there is a *rule* for deposing as well as the constitutional warrant. I do not claim this for demonstration, albeit I have chosen such a mode of reasoning; but unless I greatly err the argument claims some regard. Now, sir, there is a rule which many of us believe applies to this case, in the answer to Question 4th, page 28th—"To the General Conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary." Let it be noticed that in harmony with what I have said concerning our constitutional power, this rule does not *convey* authority, else the auxiliary "*shall*" would be used. It does not say the General Conference *shall* have authority, which is the style used in creating constitutional prerogatives. The language of the rule is simply declaratory, recognizing a power already existing. Let us notice certain phrases in this declaratory rule. "Have power to expel," sets forth the extent to which we may proceed in our efforts to guard against the consequences of a bishop's improprieties. The expulsion contemplated is doubtless from office. For though *depose* is the word generally used in such connections, *expel* is not less significant of the thing. To put out of office is expulsion. If any dispute, and say the expulsion must be from orders, or from the Church, we answer, A power to expel from Church, is certainly equal to the power of removing from office. The child who has license to play *all* day, need not dread the rod for playing *half* a day; and the boy who is told he may ride ten, cannot disobey by riding five miles. That argument is hard pushed which resorts to the

phrase, "have power to expel," to prove that the conference has not power to *depose*. "*Improper* conduct," means less than *imprudent* conduct. Imprudence carries our thoughts to the neighborhood of crime. It means a want of wisdom to a degree which involves exposure and harm. Improper means simply not suitable, or unfitting. The *usus loquendi* in the Discipline forbids us to assume that in some generic sense it embraces crime. Whatever is unfitting a bishop's office, and would impair his usefulness in the exercise of its functions, is embraced, I conceive, in the phrase "improper conduct." In the Discipline it is used in contradistinction from crime. And it is never treated as crime in the administration, except when a private member, after frequent admonitions, obstinately refuses to reform. In such a case obduracy itself becomes a criminal state of mind, and may procure expulsion. Finally, the phrase, "if they see it necessary," sheds light on the whole paragraph. It proves that improper does not mean criminal; for then it would be necessary, and the condition would be useless. The phrase accords to the conference discretionary power, and invites them to proceed on the ground of "expediency," of which some have loudly complained. They may expel him, if they see it to be proper or expedient—that is, if his improprieties injure his usefulness in the high office where our suffrages placed him.

My mind, sir, (if not my words,) has all along distinguished between orders and office. The summary removals which I have noticed are from office, not from the ministry. In regard to ordained preachers, these two rules will hold. First, they cannot be expelled from the ministry summarily; but must have a trial in due form. Second, they cannot be expelled for "improper conduct," but only for a crime clearly forbidden in the word of God. These rules, with few exceptions, will apply to private members, who may be removed from the leader's or steward's office at any time, without notice, trial, or cause assigned. But they cannot usually be expelled from the Church without trial, or the offer of trial; nor for improper conduct, unless it become incorrigibly obstinate, and then it assumes the character of crime. The principles which apply to members and preachers, should govern us in regard to bishops. They ought not to be expelled from the ministry for "improper conduct," nor without due notice and trial. But if others, they too may be deposed from office summarily, and for improprieties which, even if they be innocent, hinder their usefulness, or render their ministrations a calamity. That the bishop's is an office, is, I suppose, conceded. True we ordain him; but we may cease to ordain, and by suspending the conference rule which requires a day's delay, may immediately blot from the Discipline these words—page 26—"and the laying on of the hands of three bishops, or at least of one bishop and two elders." Would not this harmonize our practice and our principles?

I shall not dwell longer, Mr. President, on the question of conference authority. We have seen that when clerical orders or membership in the Church is concerned, crime only, or obstinate impropriety, which is *as* crime, can expel. This is Methodism. We have seen, on the other hand, that as to office, removals from it may be summary, and for anything unfitting that office, or that renders its exercise unwholesome to the Church. I have urged that all ranks of officers are included up to the point where the officer has no superior; which never happens with us, because the General Conference, under certain restrictions, is the depository of all power, legislative, judicial, and executive. I urged this *fashion* of Methodism as applicable especially to a bishop, because his superior influence will render his improprieties proportionably more embarrassing and injurious to the Church.

I have argued that the conference has power, from the grant of the constitution, (which is a catholic grant, embracing *all*, beyond a few enumerated restrictions,) to try a bishop for crime and to depose him summarily for "improper conduct." Is this hard on the bishop? Does he not summarily remove, at discretion, all the four years round, two hundred presiding elders, and two thousand of his peers; and shall he complain that a General Conference, which is a delegated body—in a word that all these two thousand peers of his, whose authority converges through the channels of representation, and concentrates here, should do to him what he so uniformly does to them? Shall one elder holding a high *office* at our hands be so puissant, that, like the sun in the heavens, (though he be a planet still, and in his office reflects no light which we have not shed upon him,) he must bind and control all, but is in turn to be controlled by none? No, sir. This conference is the sun in our orderly and beautiful system. Look into the Discipline. First you have our "articles of religion," in which God appears. What is next in order? The

General Conference, which, like the orb of day, rises to shed light on the surrounding scene. It is first shaped or fashioned, and then, like Adam by his Maker, is endowed with dominion, and made imperial in its relations; and saving the slight reservations of the constitution, it is all-controlling in its influence. Let it never be lost sight of, that the General Conference is "*the sun of our system.*"

I said, Mr. President, that if I noticed the question of expediency, it would be only by a glance. I will remark, generally, that in determining what is proper, after having ascertained what is lawful, we should look two ways. As first in importance we should consider the interests of the Church. Second, we should consult the feelings of the officer. And we should inquire as to the Church, how is she likely to be affected by the improper conduct of her officer? Will she, be locally and slightly embarrassed, or extensively and severely? If the injury threatened will be confined to a small district, and will probably be slight and ephemeral, we may bear it. But if it be likely to fall on large districts and work great evils, producing strife, breaking up societies, and nearly dissolving conferences; and if calamities so heavy are likely to be long-continued and scarcely ever end, the call for summary proceedings on the part of this conference is loud and imperative. If in such circumstances she decline to act, will she not betray her trust, and dishonour God? In regard to the officer, it should be inquired if the unfitness he has brought on himself for his sphere of action was by some imperative necessity, and if not, whether it was in presumable ignorance of the grief and misfortunes he was about to inflict on our Zion? Or must he have known what would follow, so that his act proceeded from, or at least was associated with, some degree of indifference, if not of wantonness, in regard to results? These things, sir, should be well weighed in settling the question of expediency.

A bishop's influence is not like a preacher's or class-leader's. It is diffused like the atmosphere, everywhere. So high a Church officer, (I will not say, sir, *conference* officer, though just now I take you to be such, at least for the time being,) I say, so high a Church officer should be willing to endure not slight sacrifices for this vast connection. What could tempt you, sir, to trouble and wound the Church all through from centre to circumference? The preacher and the class-leader, whose influence is guarded against so strongly, can do little harm—a bishop infinite. Their improper acts are motes in the air—yours are a pestilence abroad in the earth. Is it more important to guard against those than against these? Heaven forbid! Like the concealed attractions of the heavens, we expect a bishop's influence to be all-binding everywhere—in the heights and in the depths—in the centre and on the verge of this great system ecclesiastical. If instead of *concentric* and harmonizing movements, such as are wholesome, and conservative, and beautifying, we observe in him irregularities, which, however harmless in others, will be disastrous or fatal in him, the energy of this body, constitutionally supreme, must instantly reduce him to order, or if that may not be, plant him in another and a distant sphere. When the Church is about to suffer a detriment which we by constitutional power can avert, it is as much *treason in us not to exercise the power we have, as to usurp in other circumstances, that which we have not.*

Mr. Comfort said, the remarks he intended to make had been measurably superseded by the very able and lucid speech of the member from Ohio, Mr. Hamline. He had believed that, should this discussion be protracted ten days longer, the mind of no member on the floor would be changed; but he was now induced to think otherwise. They had been conjured to give arguments in support of the proposition before the house. If light were desired, he believed it had been furnished by the last speaker. Light had been given. A clear constitutional view of this important subject had been taken, and it only remained to apply the doctrine. In the course of the discussion, it seemed to him that the style of the speakers better corresponded to that of a mere pettifogger before an inferior court and jury, rather than that of a master in chancery before a high court of errors. Close, clear, logical argument, was alone of any value in this discussion, and that, he thought, had been furnished by the last speaker. In applying the luminous expose of the constitution just given, he would call attention to the third restrictive rule. It provided that the General Conference should not infract the "*itinerant general superintendency.*" The law enacted under that article of the constitution is found on page 29, answer to Question 6. This requires, that if a bishop cease from travelling at large among the people, he should not exercise the episcopal office without the *consent* of the General Conference. Now, could Bishop Andrew, under his present embarrassment, travel at large throughout the connection? Cer-

tainly not. And, therefore, without the consent of this conference, he must suspend the jurisdiction of his episcopal office till his embarrassment shall be removed. To confine him to any section of the work would be to curtail the itinerant *general* superintendency, and in its place to introduce a *particular* or *sectional* superintendency. This should never be done with his (Mr. Comfort's) consent. And, moreover, he did not consider Bishop Andrew before the conference on impeachment, or arraignment for improper conduct. He was before them under *embarrassment* simply, and nothing else; and, therefore, the provision which might be pleaded for an elder, in the same state where he lived, could not be pleaded for him, because, as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he belonged no more to the south than to the north: that such could not be applied to him, especially because the proposed action of this conference did not affect his *orders*, but simply his jurisdiction as an officer of the General Conference. According to Bishop Hedding, in his Notes on Discipline, he was the "servant of the elders." If so, inasmuch as the great body of the eldership was there present by representation, it was within the province of that conference to suspend the jurisdiction of Bishop Andrew for the undeniable embarrassment in which he stood before the conference. His *office*, only, was touched, not his *orders*—a distinction which could not be denied without involving the doctrine of *prelatical* episcopacy; a doctrine at the furthest remove from Methodism on this subject. As an affirmant in this debate he stood on this ground, and believed the ground tenable.

Mr. Comfort referred to a current report that Bishop Andrew came to the General Conference with the intention to resign, but had been resisted in that purpose by southern delegates. If so, the responsibility rested on those who interposed such resistance. On the part of Bishop Andrew it was most magnanimous, and must exalt him in the estimation of every one.

Dr. Capers said he had heard no such report.

Mr. Comfort said he was glad to be corrected if there was any mistake.

Dr. Capers did not wish to leave the impression that brother Comfort had intended to misrepresent this important point. He understood the facts to be these: that there was a period when Bishop Andrew had proposed to resign, but he had not thought whatever of resigning when he came here; and that he cherished such a design only when he found that his case was likely to create difficulty.

(At this moment Mr. Adams, from the New-England Conference, put the Richmond Christian Advocate in the hands of Mr. Comfort, from which he read a statement, going to say that the southern delegates had refused their consent to the bishop's offer to resign.)

Dr. Capers said this was only to relieve the present difficulty.

Mr. Comfort rejoined, Then it seems the offer has been made, and the only mistake is, it was at a subsequent period.

On the part of the replicants, it is urged against the proposition before the conference that *division* of the Church will be the consequence of its passage. But he believed there was no element in the constitution authorizing this General Conference to make any movement in that direction. It would be to transcend their province. Secession there may be, but not division. But even allowing the General Conference did possess the necessary power to divide the Church, the division of Church property would, in his opinion, involve insuperable difficulties. As, for instance, in the thirteen conferences in the south there were some 400,000 members, and of this number one-fourth were coloured people, who were not directly benefited by our books, because they could not read them. Their education was prohibited by the civil law. A catechism had been prepared for their special use and benefit. This was now taught them, and he rejoiced in the fact. But these difficulties would come up, and must be met whenever a division of the Church and of Church property should be seriously contemplated.

It was urged by the brethren from the south, that if the resolution pass they could not return home to their charges—they would not be received by their people. This he did not believe, for this reason: the south was a *unit* on the subject of slavery; one sentiment prevailed throughout all that part of the connection. Hence they would move together. They would not, *en masse*, reject their ministers should the resolution pass. Their ministers could reason with, and control them. They were not so intolerant, nor so undemocratic as the objection supposed. On this subject he could speak from some degree of personal knowledge, having spent six out of the last eight years in one of the southern slave states. He was not aware his way had ever been hedged up in his intercourse with the people or

with the slaves. He had never seen the evidence of suspicion toward him. He had always endeavoured to conduct himself as a gentleman and a clergyman, under such circumstances, ought to do, and he believed whoever would take that course would find no bar interposed before him. He believed, however odious he might be, he could himself go to any part of the south. But the case was different in the north. The people were not a unit on the subject of slavery—there was a diversity of sentiment, and the ministry could not control the action to which the position of Bishop Andrew, on the subject of slavery, would give rise. No, slavery in the episcopacy was a stronghold from which the north would be inevitably now driven if the resolution did not pass, and a new engine of tremendous power would be put into the hands of their enemies, which they would not fail to ply with desperate force against them. When the word “division” was first uttered, it waked up in his bosom emotions utterly indescribable and almost irrepressible. Those emotions had passed away, and at present he could not say he had any apprehension as to the unity of the Church; and he believed that, so long as the President occupied that chair as senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he would preside in the General Conference of the whole Methodist Episcopal Church.

Dr. Smith said—Never, sir, have I more deeply regretted, than on the present occasion, that it is not mine to be eloquent, or that words of persuasion are not familiar to my lips—so vast are the interests involved in the issue before us—so absurd are many of the doctrines stated on this floor—and withal, so ingeniously have some of them been defended by the eloquent speaker who has just taken his seat, brother Hamline, of Ohio. He brought us to the conclusion that Bishop Andrew had acted improperly, and should correct his position before the Church, or cease to exercise his episcopal functions. This, be it observed, is precisely the ground occupied by all on his side of the question, although he finds so much reason to regret the term “expediency,” by which they define their ground. If I understand him, however, he occupies the same ground. He has taken a different, and, to my view, a far more objectionable position by which to sustain his conclusion. From the fact that leaders, and other subordinate officers of the Church, may be displaced by their superiors, he argues that a bishop may be displaced at the mere discretion of the General Conference. To this I reply, that his analogy does not hold, because preachers and presiding elders are themselves immediately responsible to higher officers for any act by which they displace an inferior officer; but there is no body superior to the General Conference, and if it be not bound to observe its own rules in its administrative acts, then it is irresponsible. Its course is as unsteady as the fitful winds—its government is the mere will of a majority—in other words, a popular tyranny. He assigns this absolute administrative power to the General Conference—not even controlled by its own existing rules. Such was the doctrine as it fell upon my ear. To sustain this, he gives equal legislative powers. Sir, I deny the whole. I commend to his attention the report of the General Conference of 1828, in which this doctrine is repudiated in the strongest terms. This body has no such legislative or administrative powers. They are strictly bound to be governed in their acts of administration in Bishop Andrew's case, and every other, by their own rules. As such he is entitled to a formal trial, and cannot be deposed by any other process that does not involve a purely extra-judicial proceeding. I protest against any such proceeding; but, if driven to an informal defence, I leave the speaker in other hands as to his constitutional argument, and join issue with him on the main point involved in the merits of this case, that Bishop Andrew is guilty of improper conduct, and that expediency requires that he be silenced.

The substitute now under consideration covers the whole ground of expediency spread out in the original resolution. It adds one point; it involves a constitutional question also. It assumes that Bishop Andrew's present position tends to destroy a general superintendency. The reverse, I shall show in the sequel, is true. It was surely not the design of the venerable mover, Rev. James B. Finley, to embarrass the question by adding a new point. His design was, no doubt, to conciliate, but he is unfortunate in his measures.

To sustain my position, that Bishop Andrew has not acted improperly, I will first briefly review his conduct in the premises. A friend died some short time after his appointment as bishop, and left him a girl to raise, and, at a given age, to send her to Liberia, if she would consent to go. He faithfully fulfilled his trust. She refused to go to Liberia, and remains his property, as free as the laws of the state will permit her to be. In a second instance he inherited a boy, by the death of his

wife; he also is as free as the laws of the state will permit him to be. In a third instance, he married a lady who was the owner of slaves; and as he did not wish to become their owner, and for domestic reasons, with which this conference has nothing to do, he relinquished at once the legal title which fell to him by his marriage, and they remain the property of her to whom they belonged before his marriage. Now I maintain, that in no offensive sense is Bishop Andrew a slaveholder; that is, in the sense in which the Discipline defines a slaveholder. Two attributes must attach to the act of holding this property to make it offensive in the sense of the Discipline. First. It must be received and held with an *intention* to enslave. Surely Bishop Andrew did not do this! No one has charged him with it. Second. The person holding the slave must of purpose omit to manumit, when by doing so he could secure his freedom. It is equally certain that Bishop Andrew has not done this. He is, then, not a slaveholder in an offensive sense. An ultra-abolitionist alone could have the hardihood to pronounce him one. It is only pretended that he is "connected with slavery." Interpret this by the offensive terms employed by speakers, and the plain meaning of the offence charged is simply this: *that he married the lady of his choice, without stopping to consult the tastes and abolition affinities of New-England Methodists! And for this he is to be dishonoured before the world as having brought a stain upon Methodism.* How, sir, is this likely to be received at the south? Must there not come up, from the very foundations of society, one united voice of scathing rebuke? It is in vain to plead that this course is called for by reasons arising out of the character of our episcopacy as a general superintendency. The present prosecution follows directly on the heels of the Baltimore case. Mr. Harding, *an elder only*, was required by the Baltimore Conference to give an unconditional pledge that he would manumit slaves, which, under the laws of the state, did not belong to him. This General Conference has sustained their decision. Bishop Andrew, who, any more than Mr. Harding, cannot move in the matter, if he would, by reason of the laws of the state, must, we are told, share the same fate. It is purely an abolition movement. In no other light can it be received at the south.

Before I enter further into this discussion it is essential to my plan that I should define the position of parties in this controversy. That one of them resides at the south is not denied. These parties are defined by geographical lines as well as the principles at stake. I speak of them now as they are represented on the floor of this conference. The southern party are composed of thirteen annual conferences: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Holston, Kentucky, Tennessee, Memphis, Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. Why the Baltimore should be left out of this category the delegates from this conference must answer. (We can answer, responded many voices.) And I forewarn you that you will have to answer it to the members and other citizens of Maryland and Virginia, within your conference bounds. The second and antagonist party are not distinguished by geographical limits. They are spread through the free states, but mainly concentrated within the New-England conferences—four in number. They are distinguished by principles alone. What, sir, are the principles which distinguish them as antagonistic to the south? Their own speakers have well defined them. They have told us how the supposed disaster of leaving Bishop Andrew in the exercise of his episcopal functions is to operate among them. Several conferences, they have told us, will refuse to have Bishop Andrew preside in their sessions. Many ministers and members of the Church will withdraw. Now to whom will these characteristics apply? Will the Baltimore Conference refuse the services of Bishop Andrew? I cannot allow, sir, that the delegates of this conference correctly represent their conference and people on this subject. Indeed, one of them has assured us that the Baltimore Conference would never sustain any opposition to Bishop Andrew. The very locality of their conference, embracing the state of Maryland and a large territory in Virginia, is in full proof *that it is still at the south*, whatever may be the course of its present delegation. Will the Philadelphia and New-Jersey Conferences refuse the services of Bishop Andrew, or secede? Indeed, sir, no man will affirm this. Not even the zeal of brother Winner from New-Jersey betrayed him into a hint of this sort. Well, will New-York take this ground? Although brother Sandford, with Drs. Olin and Bangs, have clearly affiliated with the opposition, yet sir, New-York Conference will not take this position. Who will affirm it? Nor will the Ohio Conference refuse the services of Bishop Andrew. Brother Hamline, who preceded me on this subject, may go thus far. His speech years ago, on the subject of slavery, so strongly characterizing him as an abolition-

ist—(and which I never heard of his retracting)—may justify this opinion. He is an eloquent man—a man I am told of great influence—and may draw others after him. But still, sir, I have yet to learn that the Ohio Conference will take this offensive attitude toward the south and the unity of the Church. The same may be said of the Indiana and Illinois Conferences, and also of some others, I have no doubt. Where then, sir, is the location of the opposite party in this controversy? We are at no loss to answer. Their memorials are upon your table, by dozens. They are chiefly from the New-England and northern conferences, and, *with a few exceptions*, from none others. And what, sir, are their principles? Their memorials explain. They define them to be, genuine abolitionists. (No! No! from many voices.) Yes, sir, I repeat it, they are abolitionists. Do they not substantially pray for just what, on the subject of slavery, memorialists at every preceding General Conference have prayed for? And have not several preceding General Conferences condemned these memorials as abolition? Have they not denounced them in strong resolutions, against Orange Scott, the former leader of the party? And if this be not so, sir, on what grounds but those of pure abolition could these persons threaten so great an indignity to a bishop, and to the whole southern community? None, sir—none. And whither will they go, when they shall withdraw from us? Why, sir, to O. Scott, their former file-leader. (No, no, with emphasis, responded many.) Well, it may be so. One thing is certain, you affiliate with Scott on the subject of slavery. He never asked more or less than you ask by your memorials. It's only an inconsistency that you so harshly condemn Scott, so far as slavery is concerned. Whether then they unite with Scott's party or set up for themselves, the principle is the same—THEY ARE ABOLITIONISTS, UNQUESTIONABLE ABOLITIONISTS. Who that listened to brother Cass from New-Hampshire, and Spencer from Pittsburg—too honest to disguise their sentiments—can doubt this? Abolitionists, then, sir, of the M. E. Church are the party antagonist to the south in this case—and I have defined their locality, with but a few exceptions.

This array of parties leaves many conferences as represented on this floor without classification. What then, sir, is the position of those delegates who do not reside at the south, and who would not reject Bishop Andrew, nor secede from the Church? They have defined their position as "middle men,"—"conservatives;" but no, sir, their true position in this controversy is that of UMPIRES. Yes, sir, they are the *umpires* in this contest. They are to decide the issues between the south and the abolitionists. According as they shall give their votes, will the die of *union or disunion* be cast. May I be permitted to remind my brethren of the fearful responsibility of their position? If it be supposed that we of the south and the abolitionists of the north are too deeply involved to allow an impartial judgment, your position does not thus far acquit you of responsibility; yet your position is one of great delicacy; your sympathies are necessarily involved, from your local relation with the adverse party. Your judgments are very liable to be entangled; you have great need of caution. If evil come to the Church from the decision in this case, upon you will fall the tremendous responsibility. In this aspect of the subject it is cause of no little regret that many of you have already affiliated with the adversary; nay, by the positions many of you have taken on this floor, you stand forth as the leaders of the adverse party. Instead of occupying the position of umpires, you are already file-leaders of the opposition; you have still greater cause, therefore, to pause, and deliberate well your action.

Now, sir, after this marshalling of the parties in this contest, and with a clear view of the offence or crime for which the south is sought to be condemned in the character and conduct of Bishop Andrew, let me remark, that our opponents maintain that in marrying the lady of his choice, under the circumstances, Bishop Andrew "acted improperly." That the General Conference, having full administrative power, *can and ought* to depose him—whether it be provided for in the Discipline, or not. Astounding assumption of power! To state it is to refute it. And why, sir, is it assumed? Because it is known that if the bishop be tried by the Discipline of the Church, he cannot be condemned. We of the south maintain that he stands acquitted by the Discipline, and that to condemn him without the forms, or the authority of our rules, is not only unjust, but extra-judicial. Let us try this issue.

The first ground on which the abolition argument rests the charge of "improper conduct," is, *that by his marriage he has rendered himself "unacceptable" to a large portion of the north, and should therefore be deprived of his office.* "Unacceptable!" To whom? Abolitionists. Well, is "unacceptability" a cause of itself

sufficient to convict and depose a bishop? Suppose New-England, often as rife with heretical doctrine as they are in the various expedients of living, had generally (as indeed many did) become Millerites, and hence had pronounced all our bishops "unacceptable," should we therefore depose them all to appease this wayward and fanatical temper? Surely not. Is he indeed "unacceptable?" Whose fault is it? Is it his? Or is it theirs? How is this question to be tried? Why, by the Discipline of the Church. So would any man say, it appears to me, who had not taken leave of his senses. If, then, Bishop Andrew has so far offended against the Discipline of the Church as to render himself *justly* "unacceptable," let him go—I ask no protection for him—I will not lift a finger in his behalf. But has he so offended? This, sir, is the true issue, with every one but brother Hamline, who maintains that this body has power to condemn without law. Has he thus offended? Does he hold his office in violation of Discipline? If so, let it be taken from him. Discipline, page 195, says, "No slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." The further clause of Discipline on this point provides, especially, that the preacher who shall become connected with slavery shall liberate his slaves, "if it be practicable." Bishop Andrew, it is said, is a slaveholder. Grant it, for the sake of argument. Have you not been assured upon the highest authority, such as no one has pretended to doubt, that the laws of the state of Georgia, in which he lives, do not admit of emancipation under any possible or conceivable circumstances whatever? Is he not then entitled to office under the Discipline of the Church? But what the rule does not afford to the opposition, they seek, in true characteristic style, to supply by *expedients*. Yes, sir, "expediency" we are told, in view of his "unacceptability," requires his deposition, though the rule may not require it. But, let it be observed, that this rule of Discipline is not *merely a rule* or statute, but it is a *compromise—especially a compromise act*. It forms the basis of union in regard to slavery, on the principle of compromise, and therefore settles the whole question of expediency in relation to the eligibility of slaveholders to office in the Church, and hence the propriety or impropriety of the conduct of an officer of the Church who becomes the owner of slave property.

We say, the rules in regard to the eligibility of slaveholders to office in the Church are a compromise—not of principles, on the part of the south, but of local interests—forming a basis of union, a common platform, on which the opposite parties have stood since soon after the organization of the Church. Let us look to the history of our legislation on the subject for the proof. From Emory's History of our Discipline, we find that the first rule passed on the subject was in these words: "Ought not this conference to require those travelling preachers who hold slaves to give promise to set them free? *Answer*. Yes;" and then follows a fearful denunciation of slavery and slaveholders. Here the ground is taken that the preachers, from the superintendent, or bishop, as he is now called, down to the licensed preacher, shall *unconditionally*, without regard to consequences, manumit his slaves. The Christmas conference of 1784, at which the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, made the *unconditional manumission* of slaves a condition of membership. The slaveholders residing in Virginia, and in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, were allowed two years to consider whether they would comply with this condition. Slaveholders in all other sections were allowed but one year. In six months after the passage of this *new condition of membership*, they passed a rule, which, while it left it a little modified in the Discipline, suspended its operation for the present, declaring that it "would do harm, instead of good." In 1796, twelve years after this new term of membership was adopted, they found that, even to keep it, though in a suspended form, in the book of Discipline, was productive of great evil. They therefore passed a resolution, requesting both preachers and people deeply to consider the subject of negro slavery, and to communicate their views to the ensuing General Conference which was to convene in 1800. At this period the conference adopted the rule which now stands in the Discipline, page 195, *in regard to preachers holding slaves*. The offensive condition of membership still remained in the Discipline as a testimony of disapprobation until 1808, though its operation was suspended. In 1816 the eligibility of members of the Church to any office, so far as slavery is concerned, was established on the terms stated in the rule, as it now stands in the book of Discipline.

Here, sir, let it be briefly noticed, that, according to this showing, in 1800 the conference receded from the strong ground taken in 1780, and required of preachers

only a *conditional* manumission, thus leaving the rule of Discipline to be controlled in its application by the legislation of the different state legislatures. In 1796 they receded from the strong ground taken in 1784 against members holding slaves; and in 1808 all which related to private members was expunged from the Discipline, and in 1816 the basis of compromise was completed. These facts, in connection with the history of the times, will show our present rules to be a compromise; on the part of the slaveholding membership a sacrifice of *local interests*, and on the part of the non-slaveholding members a yielding of original abolition principles. The first ground taken in regard to ministers holding slaves in 1780 was the purely abolition action of *unconditional manumission*; this ground is clearly yielded in the *conditional rule, adopted in 1800*, and which still stands in the Discipline. The ground first taken against the private membership was equally abolition in its character. This was yielded in 1808, by expunging all *enactments* on the subject from the book of Discipline. Here then, sir, was an entire abandonment of the abolition ground first taken by the Church.

On the part of the slaveholding interests there was also a concession—not of principle, for they had no errors to compromise—but of great local interests. The ground just taken against them was found to be ruinous—it was little short of an act expelling the Methodist Church from a slaveholding community; and although the conference receded from it in 1796, the testimony which the Church still bore upon this subject by letting the suspended rule remain in the Discipline was found to be attended with nothing but disaster. And the fact is that both *then and now*, although slavery as it exists in America is an evil, as I was free to allow in my defence of Harding, the publication of that fact in the strong terms employed in the Discipline was never calculated to accomplish anything but mischief. Bishop Asbury, whose views were altogether ultra on this subject in the early part of his life, was long before his death fully convinced of it, and was free to declare, it was a great pity that the Church had taken any action upon the subject. Yet the legislation of 1800 and 1816, inclusive, shows that this point was fully yielded, and as a balance against the concessions of the true abolition party, it was allowed that the Discipline should declare slavery to be “a great evil.” Thus the non-slaveholding party claimed that the Church should testify against the “evil of slavery,” and was willing to submit the administration of the rule to be controlled by state legislation. The slaveholding party, very much against their local interests as a Church—tending only to prejudice them in the public mind—consented that the Discipline should testify against slavery as “an evil,” and accepted the boon tendered them, that the operation of the rule be controlled by the legislatures of their own states. Thus a basis of union was formed between these opposing parties—a common platform on which they could each stand in coming years. And, sir, is it inquired, on what ground does this compromise rest? The answer is plain—the ground of expediency—of sound discretion—all going to establish the policy of the Church on the subject of slavery to be this: *that members shall be eligible to any office in the Church on the conditions stated in the rule*—it being only on this ground that the parties could harmonize at all—only on this ground (if the Church took any action upon the subject) that she could exist at all in a slaveholding community.

Now, sir, from this plain and obvious view of the compromise rule of Discipline I deduce these conclusions:—

First, (in regard to petitions and memorials,) the whole policy of the Church being settled by compromise on the basis of expediency, all petitions and memorials, whether from the north or the south, contemplating any action on the subject of slavery, should be at once laid on the table, or returned to their owners, so long as this compromise rule remains in the book of Discipline. Any serious consideration of the ultra measures of memorialists is in violation of good faith to the party to which they stand opposed.

Second, I deduce this conclusion in relation to the case of Bishop Andrew—if he be “unacceptable” to the abolitionists and to those who associate with them, by reason of his having such connection with slavery as is provided for in the compromise rule, it is the fault of those to whom he is thus “unacceptable.” All allow that his case is within the provisions of this rule. *They then, and not Bishop Andrew or his friends, must suffer the consequences of his “unacceptability.”* Regarding this body as an assembly of grave divines, bound to observe their own legislation on the subject of slavery, *I maintain that in these conclusions, you are held, as men of conscience, by chords stronger than the withs of Samson, or hooks*

of iron and steel. If with the member from Ohio you free yourselves from the conscientious duty of observing your own rules on the subject of slavery, then you are under no restraint—you are lawless. The caprice of a reckless majority is the law of the Church.

The second ground on which it is sought to convict Bishop Andrew of "improper conduct" is, that by becoming connected with slavery, he has violated the "*settled policy of the Church.*" But what is our policy in relation to ministers holding slaves? It is settled in the compromise rule. No one has affirmed that his case does not fall within the provisions of this rule. Then his present position is in perfect harmony with the "*settled policy*" of the Church as defined in the compromise rule. The mover of the original resolution, Rev. A. Griffith, of Baltimore, did not surely have this in view. He no doubt meant, by the "*settled policy of the Church,*" the motives which usually influenced members in voting for bishops. Strange source, to be sure, to look for the policy of the Church! But he is quite as unfortunate as unwise in this appeal to the policy of the Church! I present him a dilemma. The members of the General Conference of 1832, who voted for James O. Andrew as a southern man, to be bishop, *either did so, on the principle of the compromise rule, or they did not: if they did,* Bishop Andrew was then elected on the principles of the compromise rule, and he is not an offender against the principles of his election, because his present position in relation to slavery is within the provisions of this rule, as no one denies. *If they did not,* then they deceived the southern portion of the Church, by publishing to the world, in the Book of Discipline, that the basis of compromise laid in the rule on slavery should govern their elections. Hence either Bishop Andrew is not an offender against the principles on which he was elected, or those who elected him were deceivers. Mr. Griffith, and his friends who voted with him in electing Bishop Andrew in 1832, may take which horn of the dilemma they please.

The third ground on which this *extra* proceeding is based is, that his present position, as a slaveholding bishop, "*is in violation of the usage,*" or common law of the Church. Dr. Olin, whom I regret to know has avowed himself against us in this controversy, has, nevertheless, agreed with Dr. Winans in setting aside this position, for the obvious reason that an omission to elect a slaveholder a bishop is no proof that it is the usage of the Church that a slaveholder shall not be bishop. But, sir, it is not with arguments of this kind I seek to engage your attention, but rather with the law in the case. In civil jurisprudence the common law is necessarily subordinate in authority to the statute law. So in ecclesiastical administrations, the common usage must yield to the specific rule of Discipline. Consequently, if there be a usage among us which violates the plain provisions of the rule on slavery, it should be given up as contrary to Methodist discipline. Hence, if there be such a usage as that contended for so earnestly by speakers, it is of no authority at all.

The fourth ground taken is this: "*Bishop Andrew was nominated by our southern brethren, and elected by the General Conference of 1832, as a candidate, who, though living amidst a slaveholding population, was nevertheless free from all connection with slavery:*" hence it is maintained, "*that his present position is in violation of good faith.*" Before I discuss this objection, so much relied on by the member from Baltimore, I must remark on the coarse and offensive terms in which Bishop Andrew, and even Mrs. Andrew, has been alluded to, by speakers on this floor and elsewhere. I will give you a case. In prosecuting my duties, as a member of a sub-committee, I met with the following record in the journals of an annual conference, for which it is now proposed to sacrifice the south. A member of the body was charged before the conference with having stipulated to marry a lady while his wife was supposed to be lying at the point of death. His wife, however, recovered, and his adulterous purposes were defeated. The conference found him guilty of a great imprudence, and only suspended him for *one year*, making provision at the same time, by a committee, for the conditional removal of the suspension. I need hardly add, sir, that so total a want of everything like a just and delicate sense of propriety to the marriage relation as would dictate so mild a censure, in so flagrant an instance of infidelity, may well apologize to Bishop Andrew and his friends for all the coarse and indelicate allusions to himself and lady from a quarter like this.

But to return: it has been well established before this conference, by Dr. Winans, that Bishop Andrew was not nominated by the southern delegation, in 1832. He *was*, however, by a southern member—Dr. Capers. I am due this

brother an apology, sir, and I take this occasion to say to him, that I was, until his explanation yesterday, under the impression that he was a little truant to his southern brethren, in nominating Bishop Andrew. For this reason, and this alone, I did not unite with him in the election of Bishop Andrew. I am happy, however, to acknowledge the injustice I did the doctor; but I assure him, sir, he has never been denied a warm place in my affections, as a Christian brother. If Bishop Andrew was elected on the ground that he was not a slaveholder, he has assured us, that it was from no pledge given, or in any way authorized by him, that he would not become one. *Neither does his position at present, sir, violate any obligation implied in his election.* He was elected, it is well known, because he resided in a slaveholding state, and he was expected to continue to reside there. Now, sir, can it be supposed that the General Conference, of 1832, was so imbecile of mind, as not to have known, at the time of his election, that from his very location and circumstances he was at all times liable to become connected with slavery, by the death of friends, or by marriage; and that, in all human probability, he would become so connected, in process of time? In view of this obvious probability he was elected. And let me remind you, that they were often told of these liabilities. I, myself, urged them as a reason why they should elect the individual whom I preferred, on the ground of his being a slaveholder. The answer usually given was a very natural one. We will elect Andrew in preference to one who is a slaveholder, because it will secure a more harmonious vote in the north and west; and if he should become connected with slavery, as you state, and as we allow he may be, why then it will be in the providence of God, and fall within the provisions of the compromise rule—and we must submit to it. They would then turn my argument upon me, and urge me to vote for Andrew in the spirit of conciliation. And now, sir, since this result has transpired—a result which school-boys could have forecast, and in view of which (unless you suppose the conference of 1832 distinguished by the merest imbecility) James O. Andrew was elected—will you now censure him?—will you now seek to degrade him? Ay—and with a rudeness of language, which, to say the least of it, can scarcely admit of apology—will you seek to invade the peace of as pure a heart as ever throbbed in the breast of man—by charging him with a violation of plighted faith? O shame, shame, where is thy blush! What but the grossness of a fanaticism which knows no shame could demand of him a violation of his vows of consecration to the office of bishop in the Church of God!

It is in vain, sir, to plead in defence of this most unwarrantable proceeding, that the constitutional feature of our episcopacy, viz., that it shall be a general superintendency, demands that he should desist from the duties of his office. If a bishop who has violated no rule of Discipline, but who, on the contrary, occupies the ground provided for him by a specific rule of the Discipline—if he may be deposed at the mere caprice of the conference, because he is unacceptable to those who themselves abandon the Discipline—then may another, and another be deposed, for similar, or other causes of dissatisfaction; and thus may the entire office be degraded from the solemn character attached to it by ordination, and rendered a mere system of “ins” and “outs”—an unhallowed object of ambition to contemptible aspirants. The plan of annually presiding in every conference, or once within the recess of the sessions of General Conference, expired with Bishop Asbury. No one since his day has done this. Bishop Hedding has not visited the southern conferences, if at all, not more than once in twenty years. Is he less a general superintendent for this? A general superintendency, as interpreted by the practice of late years, implies eligibility to preside in any conference, but an actual presidency only where prudence demands it. If, sir, it was the design of the mover of the substitute, to soften the harsher features of the original resolution, by proposing a milder course, why not avoid all censure of Bishop Andrew? He has violated no rule of Discipline—compromitted no principle. If regrets must be expressed by resolution, do not the mischiefs which our opponents have made to arise out of Bishop Andrew's relation to slavery furnish sufficient reasons for expressing them? Why censure him who has done no wrong? Then let your action, if you must act at all, conform to this view of the subject. And though you should append a request that he free himself from his present relation to slavery, “*if it be practicable*,” we could not absolutely object to it—at least the consequences would not be so serious. This would leave him to serve the southern conferences for the next four years, on the ground of expediency, and thus relieve the difficulty of which so loud a complaint is made. But, sir, if the abolitionists continue to reject this plan, by which Bishop

Andrew can be no annoyance to them—if they will persist in censuring him by a resolution, which they wish to be understood as mandatory, however softened the tone of expression—is it not clear that it is a decided abolition measure? And if those whom I have designated as our umpires in this case should affiliate with the movers of this measure, by supporting their most unreasonable pretensions, do they not make the Church, in this act of administration, at least, a *decided abolition Church*? In what other light, sir, can we understand the adoption of the substitute, or the original resolution, *under these circumstances*? Will not the decision clearly assume, *that while the episcopal office is filled by an individual who holds slaves, under any circumstances whatever—however justifiable those circumstances may be in themselves—the Church maintains therein an unhallowed connection with slavery, that should not, and will not, be tolerated!*

I feel fully assured, sir, that I express the deliberate and most solemn conviction of every southern man on this floor, in the three statements which I here make:—

1. The adoption of either the substitute or the original resolution would be in the highest degree proscriptive—a most humiliating degradation of the whole southern ministry—reckless of the character and feelings of the membership of the Church among whom, and the citizens of the states within which, we live and labour; such as must materially impair our standing and means of usefulness. How, sir, can we avoid these results? You place us in direct connection with an abolition Church—a fanaticism at once the grief of the pious, and the scorn of the wicked, among whom we live.

2. That, in the more southern conferences, submission to such an act of proscription will put in jeopardy all our missions among the slaves, and, sooner or later, close the door of usefulness to a large portion of the coloured population. For the truth of this I more particularly appeal to my esteemed friend, Dr. Capers, the member from South Carolina. (Dr. Capers assumed the truth of the statement.) Yes, sir, no one acquainted with the facts can doubt the truth of the statement. I hope sir, we shall hear from Dr. Capers, in detail, upon this point. With this view, I will not seem to forestall him by any further remarks. I am sure that his statements, as the superintendent of these missions, will be entitled to far more credit than anything I could say.

3. That, sooner than submit to results so fatal to our prospects as an important portion of the Church, and our means of usefulness among the coloured people especially, a division of our ecclesiastical confederation would become a high and solemn duty—a duty to which we stand pledged by the sacredness of our character as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our fidelity to the states within which we live. This General Conference I am aware, sir, has no authority directly to effect this separation. This subject must go back to the organic bodies we represent, and to the people—the membership of the Church—who must be consulted, and whose voice must be regarded as an authoritative decision, from which there is no appeal.

Allow me to remark, sir, that we are placed in a false position when we are represented as the friends of disunion. *No, sir; we are the friends of union.* We stand on the grand conservative platform laid by our fathers in the book of Discipline. As long as you will permit us to occupy this ground, in peace, we are contented and happy. But allow me to assure you, that we have no more inheritance among you when you shall have driven us from this ground. Demolish this platform, and we are no longer one of you. But, sir, we are told the north do not desire to dissolve our union. With what degree of favour can we receive this assurance? Shall a man who approaches a powder magazine, with a glowing coal of fire in his hand, which he vows it is his purpose to cast into it—shall he tell us that he does not intend to produce an explosion!—that he seriously deprecates so great a disaster! If brethren be governed by the motives which they claim for themselves—if, as they say, it is indispensable to their existence that they get rid of Bishop Andrew—have we not a right to claim, as they have the majority in this case, that they propose a friendly separation at once? In this plain state of the case, why, sir, is it sought to drive us to desperate results? Is it, after all, true, that this whole affair is a mere stroke of policy? When I came to this place I was assured that Bishop Andrew was to be deposed; and that “if the south should go off in a pet,” they would do it at the sacrifice of their interest in the property of the Church, of which it was thought there was no cause for alarm. Why, sir! can it be seriously maintained that a question of dollars and cents shall be an element entering into the calculation whether or not we shall exist at all at the south, as a Church? How childish!

I will say, however, for the benefit of these farthing politicians, that if it may please our brethren to make an issue with us about a *pro rata* division of the property of the Church, we are competent to lay an injunction upon every press and book-store you have, until the courts of the land shall determine who are the M. E. Church, and which of the adverse parties are entitled to the property. I am happy, however, to learn—and I credit the statement—that the good sense and piety of the body will save us from any such results.

But, sir, I will mention another delusion which seems to have entered into the calculations of some. It is supposed, we fear a dissolution of the confederation of the states will follow a separation of our ecclesiastical union, and that we shall be involved in a civil war with the north, on account of our slaves; and hence will submit to any measure of proscription that this conference may dictate. Sir, nothing can be more absurd. Science and religion have advanced too far in parallel lines to allow of this result. Science has so multiplied the agents of destruction, that wars hereafter must prove to be measures little short of extermination on both sides. Christian nations cannot fall upon measures of this sort. Religion, even among fanatics, will forbid it. Differences must be settled by negotiation. The evils to be dreaded in the political world are the tyranny of majorities, and the desolating footsteps of the lawless mob. Our ecclesiastical union, sir, ought to exert a happy influence on the political union. Harmonizing as we should do—and, as I hope, we will yet do—our influence would be highly conservative. But, sir, it may not surprise you when I say, that things are hastening to that crisis among us, when our separation becomes necessary to preserve our political union. Yes, sir, southern Methodists, and politicians in and out of the Church, need only to know the facts to change their opinions—long cherished, perhaps—as to the present conservative character of the Methodist general union. What, sir, are the facts? Is it not true, that, if the abolition excitement, so fatal to the peace and prosperity of the whole country, did not originate among northern Methodists, that it has been chiefly cherished by the members and ministers of our Church? For the last twelve years this agitation has been increasing in that section. And this body (the General Conference) has concentrated, once in every four years, the whole of this excitement, and from this point it has diffused itself to agitate and afflict the whole country. Thus have a northern faction, *by abolition lectures, professedly to operate upon the General Conference*, been able to multiply their petitions and memorials to congress and the different state legislatures. Without the pretext which you have afforded them, their efforts had been powerless. But, sir, through this General Conference the whole country has felt the blow of an unknown hand. Yes, sir, I repeat, you are fast losing your conservative character and influence. By years of departure from the plain duties which appertain to you as a council of Christian ministers, to discuss and settle the great and perplexing question of American slavery—a question which belongs exclusively to our national councils, and one which statesmen of the greatest distinction touch with a trembling hand—you are rendering yourselves odious to the political union. Andrew's case and Harding's case are but incidents in this view of the matter. No, sir, any interference whatever, on your part, with this question, is insufferable. The political interests of the country forbid it; and will sooner or later demand, that all ecclesiastical bodies, who shall thus abuse the design of their union, *shall be dissolved*. If we cannot maintain our union upon a more harmonious basis, we cannot safely have it at all. It entered into my plan, on this occasion, to show that this whole measure was sustained by a false sympathy for the negro race in this country; that the present and prospective condition of our country requires, in an eminent degree, the conservative influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Yes, sir, that the cause of Christ—the cause of human salvation—and its bearing upon the happiness and prosperity of our political confederation, demand that we husband our resources as a Church—that we concentrate our influence upon the one great object of spreading Scripture holiness over these lands—the only legitimate object of ecclesiastical legislation. I intended to show that any departure from this appropriate field of labour—any interference with the vexed question of slavery—was fatal to us as a Church—fatal to the cause of Christ, and perilous to the liberties of the country. But, sir, I have been so borne down by the protracted excitement of this occasion—and withal have already occupied so much of your attention, that I must take my seat, tendering you my thanks for the indulgence you have so patiently extended me.

Mr. Hamline, having declined to interrupt Dr. Smith while on the floor, now asked and obtained leave to explain.

First. Dr. Smith says "he [Mr. Hamline] brought you to the conclusion that Bishop Andrew had acted improperly."

Ans. I did not name Bishop Andrew or any other bishop. I intended to argue, not to accuse; and if I carried you to that conclusion, as he says, whether it was by argument or not, it could not have been by confident assertion, as to Bishop Andrew's conduct.

Second. I argued that a bishop may be displaced at the *discretion* of the conference, when in their opinion it becomes "*necessary*" on account of improper conduct, and, I might have said, without improper conduct on his part, so far as *constitutional restrictions* are concerned.

Third. I never said, as brother Smith affirms, that the administrative powers of this conference are "absolute." I said they were "*supreme*." Absolute means "*not bound*." This conference is bound in all its powers, whether legislative, judicial, or executive, by constitutional restrictions. "Supreme" means that while acting within its constitutional limits, its decisions are final, and all-controlling.

Fourth. As to my use of the word legislative, the hypercriticism of brother Smith would apply to the use of the term judicial with equal force; for properly the conference has neither the functions of a legislature nor of a court. I used the term as it is used every five or ten minutes by all around me. And it is amusing that brother Smith should have fallen into the very fashion for which he reproves me. He said if the conference does this "*it acts above law*." Now where there is no legislation there can be no law. I commend to him, in turn, the report of 1828, which has long been familiar to me, and of which I most cordially approve; yet I presume that he, as well as myself, will continue to use the only convenient terms, *legislation* and *law*, to distinguish one class of conference powers from another.

Fifth. As to the assertion that the analogy between bishops and inferior officers will not hold, because this conference is not responsible for its action as removing officers are; I answer—This conference is responsible to the constitution, and if it wished to bind itself not to remove a bishop, it could call on the annual conferences to aid it in assuming a constitutional restriction. Not having done so, proves that it intends to hold this power, and execute it when necessary.

Sixth. As to the abolition address charged on me, the conference may be surprised to learn, that it was a colonization address; and was so acceptable that the Colonization Society in Zanesville published it in pamphlet form. Moreover, a friend of mine forwarded a copy, without my knowledge, to Mr. Gurley, of Washington City, who noticed it with unmerited commendation in the African Repository, the official organ of the American Colonization Society, and gave extracts of it to the public. Surely the brother is too magnanimous to have attempted to counteract the force of my argument by misrepresenting, and rendering me personally odious. As to my exerting my slender influence for evil ends at home, I must submit to be judged by my own conference, who will know how to estimate the value and the motive of the insinuation.

TUESDAY, MAY 28.

Mr. J. A. Collins, of the Baltimore Conference, who had got possession of the floor on Monday, a few minutes previous to adjournment, continued his address. He commenced by speaking of the alarming crisis that had arrived in the history of the Church, and said he would give his reasons for coming to the conclusion at which he had arrived. He contended that it *was* the usage of the Church to oppose having a slaveholding bishop, and thought the arguments made use of against it were most unfortunate. He thought there was no danger of the Church following in the footsteps of the Papal Church, as stated by Mr. Longstreet.

Mr. Longstreet explained.

Mr. Collins had no doubt the brother was right—there was no danger; it was quite the other way—all the operations tended to pare off the power of the bishops. It was also said that by passing this resolution, the punishment inflicted upon the bishop was greater than that inflicted upon the members. This not being correct, it should have no weight or influence. The main stress in all this argument was laid upon the compromise act. He denied them this ground *in toto*—there was no such compromise in the constitution. What was a constitution? It contained the fundamental principles of the law, and if this be not in the constitution, and they find it elsewhere, the constitution had been violated. But he denied that this was

Bishop Andrew then rose, evidently labouring under powerful emotion, and spoke as follows :

Mr. President,—I have been on trial now for a week, and feel desirous that it should come to a close. For a week I have been compelled to listen to discussions of which I have been the subject, and I must have been more than man, or less than man, not to have felt. Sir, I have felt and felt deeply. I am not offended with any man. The *most* of those who have spoken against me, have treated me respectfully, and have been as mild as I had any right to expect. I cherish no unkind feelings toward any. I do not quarrel with my abolition brethren, though I believe their opinions to be erroneous and mischievous. Yet so long as they conduct themselves courteously toward me, I have no quarrel with them. It is due that some remarks should be made by me, before the conference come to a conclusion upon the question, which I hope will be speedily done, for I think a week is long enough for a man to be shot at, and it is time the discussion should terminate.

As there has been frequent reference to the circumstances of my election to the episcopal office, it is perhaps proper that I give a brief history of that matter. A friend of mine (brother Hodges) now with God, asked me to permit myself to be put in nomination for that office. I objected—the office had no charms for me. I was with a conference that I loved, and that loved me. What was I to gain to be separated from a happy home—from a wife and children whom I loved more than I did my own life? But my friend urged me; he said my election would, he believed, tend to promote the peace of the Church, and that he believed it would be especially important to the prosperity of Methodism at the south. Finally I consented, with the hope of failure; but I was nominated and elected. I was never asked if I was a slaveholder—no man asked me what were my principles on the subject—no one dared to ask of me a pledge in this matter, or it would have been met as it deserved. Only one man, brother Winans, spoke to me on the subject: he said he could not vote for me because he believed I was nominated under the impression that I was not a slaveholder. I told him I had not sought the nomination, nor did I desire the office, and that my opinions on the propriety of making non-slaveholding a test of qualification for the office of bishop were entirely in unison with his own. Sir, I do not believe in this matter of secret will as a rule of action, either in the revelations of the Bible, or in the prescriptions of the book of Discipline. I believe in the revealed will of God, and in the written law of the Church as contained in the book of Discipline. I took office upon the broad platform of that book, and I believe my case is covered by it. It was known that I was to reside at the south; I was elected in view of that very thing, as it was judged important to the best interests of the Church that one of the bishops should reside in that section of the work, and it was judged I could be more useful there than elsewhere. Well, what was I to do then? I was located in a country where free persons could not be obtained for hire, and I could not do the work of the family—my wife could not do it—what was I to do? I was compelled to hire slaves, and pay their masters for their hire; but I had to change them every year—they were bad servants, for they had no interest in me or mine—and I believe it would have been less sin before God to have bought a servant who would have taken an interest in me and I in him: but I did not do so. At length, however, I came into the possession of slaves; and I am a slaveholder, (as I have already explained to the conference,) and I cannot help myself. It is known that I have waded through deep sorrows at the south during the last four years; I have buried the wife of my youth and the mother of my children, who left me with a family of motherless children, who needed a friend and a mother. I sought another: (and with this the conference has nothing to do;) I found one, who, I believed would make me a good wife, and a good mother for my children. I had known her long—my children knew and loved her. I sought to make my home a happy one—and I have done so. Sir, I have no apology to make. It has been said, I did this thing voluntarily, and with my eyes open. I did so deliberately and in the fear of God—and God has blessed our union. I might have avoided this difficulty by resorting to a trick—by making over these slaves to my wife before marriage, or by doing as a friend who has taken ground in favour of the resolution before you suggested: “Why,” said he, “did you not let your wife make over these negroes to her children, securing to herself an annuity from them?” Sir, my conscience would not allow me to do this thing. If I had done so, and those negroes had passed into the hands of those who would have treated them unkindly, I should have been unhappy.

Strange as it may seem to brethren, I am a slaveholder for conscience' sake. I have no doubt that my wife would, without a moment's hesitation, consent to the manumission of those slaves, if I thought proper to do it. I know she would unhesitatingly consent to any arrangement I might deem it proper to make on the subject. But how am I to free them? Some of them are old, too old to work to support themselves, and are only an expense to me; and some of them are little children: where shall I send these, and who will provide for them? But, perhaps, I shall be permitted to keep these; but, then, if the others go, how shall I provide for these helpless ones? and as to the others, to what free state shall I send them? and what would be their condition? Besides, many of them would not go—they love their mistress, and could not be induced, under any circumstances, to leave her. Sir, an aged and respectable minister said to me several years ago, when I had stated just such a case to him, and asked him what he would do,—“I would set them free,” said he, “I'd wash my hands of them, and if they went to the devil, I'd be clear of them.” Sir, into such views of religion or philanthropy my soul cannot enter. I believe the providence of God has thrown these creatures into my hands, and holds me responsible for their proper treatment. I have secured them to my wife by deed of trust since our marriage. The arrangement was only in accordance with an understanding existing previous to marriage. These servants were hers—she had inherited them from her former husband's estate—they had been her only source of support during her widowhood, and would still be her only dependance if it should please God to remove me from her. I have nothing to leave her. I have given my life to the Church from the days of my youth, (and I am now fifty,) and although, as I have previously remarked, she would consent to any arrangement I might make, yet I cannot consent to take advantage of her affection for me to induce her to do what would injure her without at all benefiting the slaves.

Sir, I did not for a moment believe that this body of grave and reverend ministers would make this a subject of serious discussion. I thought it likely that there might be some warm ultra brethren here who would take some exception to my course, and on that account I did not make the deed of trust before marriage, lest some should suppose I designed to dodge the responsibility of the case. Those who know me must know that I could not be governed by the mere matter of dollars and cents. What can I do? I have no confession to make—I intend to make none. I stand upon the broad ground of the Discipline on which I took office, and if I have done wrong, put me out. The editor of the Christian Advocate has prejudged this case. He makes me the scape goat of all the difficulties which abolition excitement has gotten up at the north. I am the only one to blame, in his opinion, should mischief grow out of this case. But I repeat, if I have sinned against the Discipline, I refuse not to die. I have spent my life for the benefit of the slaves. When I was but a boy, I taught a Sunday-school for slaves, in which I taught a number of them to read; and from that period till this day I have devoted my energies to the promotion of their happiness and salvation; with all my influence in private, in public, with my tongue, with my pen, I have assiduously endeavoured to promote their present and eternal happiness. And am I to be sacrificed by those who have done little or nothing for them? It is said, I have rendered myself unacceptable to our people. I doubt this: I have just returned from Philadelphia, where they knew me to be a slaveholder; yet they flocked to hear me, and the presence of God was with us; we had a good, warm, old-fashioned meeting. I may be unacceptable in New-York, yet from the experience I have had, I doubt even that. To whom am I unacceptable? Not to the people of the south—neither masters nor slaves. Has my connection with slaves rendered me less acceptable to the coloured people of the south—the very people for whom all this professed sympathy is felt? Does the fact that I am a slaveholder make me less acceptable among them? Let those who have laboured long among them answer the question. Sir, I venture to say, that in Carolina or Georgia I could to-day get more votes for the office of bishop from the coloured people, than any supporter of this resolution, let him avow himself an emancipator as openly as he pleases. To the coloured people of the south there, and to their owners,—to the entire membership of the slaveholding conferences, I would not be unacceptable—but, perhaps, they are no part of “our people;” in short, sir, I believe that I should not be unacceptable to one half of the connection—but on this question I have nothing to say. Should the conference think proper to pass me, there is plenty of ground where I can labour acceptably and usefully. The slaveholding

conferences will present a field sufficiently large for me, should I live to the age of Methuselah, and the bishops, in arranging the work, will certainly have discretion enough not to send me where I would not be received; nor would I obtrude myself upon any conference, or lay my hands upon the head of any brother who would feel himself contaminated by the touch. However, on this subject I have nothing to say. The conference can take its course; but I protest against the proposed action as a violation of the laws of the Discipline, and an invasion of the rights secured to me by that book. Yet let the conference take the steps they contemplate; I enter no plea for mercy—I make no appeal for sympathy; indeed, I love those who sympathize with me, but I do not want it now. I wish you to act coolly and deliberately, and in the fear of God; but I would rather that the conference would change the issue, and make the resolution to depose the bishop, and take the question at once, for I am tired of it. The country is becoming agitated upon the subject, and I hope the conference will act forthwith on the resolution.

Mr. Finley said,—Mr. President, I arise with some trepidation, and think I should not speak at all if I were not placed in the situation I am, as the mover of the substitute on your table. When I proposed it, it was with the purest motives, I am sure, and believing it would be more acceptable than the original resolution. In framing that substitute, I thought I took ground on the constitution of our Church; and I am sure I have expressed nothing in the preamble but what are the acknowledged facts in the case. The resolution is only to express the sense of the General Conference in reference to the facts as they exist, in connection with the situation in which these circumstances have placed the superintendent.

Now, sir, in regard to the ground taken, this General Conference is restricted against doing anything which will destroy our itinerant general superintendency. This principle must be conceded. That Bishop Andrew has become connected with the great evil of slavery, he himself has declared on this floor, and says he is a slaveholder. This fact will not be denied; and that this connection with slavery has drawn after it circumstances that will embarrass his exercising the office of an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it. I ask any man on this floor to deny these things. Now, sir, are not all the facts true, and true to the life? Hence, the question follows, Will this General Conference permit one of its vital and constitutional principles to be broken down and trampled under foot, because one of her general officers has seen fit to involve himself in circumstances which will trammel that office in more than half of all the field of his labour? Now, sir, I take my stand here this day to oppose, to my utmost, the violation of so sacred a principle. Was Bishop Andrew involved in these circumstances when he was elected to that office? *No, sir*: no man here will say he was. And could he have been elected to that office if he had been? *No, sir*: no man here will assert that he could. He was chosen with the declaration of southern men that he was not then, and never had been, connected with the evil of slavery; and we had reason to believe he never would be, or he could not have been chosen to that office. Well now, sir, what is the state of the case? He has become a slaveholder. I ask you, sir, whose fault is this? It is his own voluntary act, in view of all the circumstances. This voluntary act has thrown this great body of ministers, and the whole Church, into this tremendous state of agitation, of which he could now relieve us, if he would, by his resignation.

But, sir, what does this resolution request of him? The mildest and most moderate thing the case is capable of, without giving up the whole principle, viz., "that it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of his office until these impediments be removed." This resolution was modified to the most easy requirement it could be to meet the feeling of southern brethren, and to cover the principle, and from this ground I will not be moved. No, sir; on this ground will I stand until I die. There are two great principles to be determined in this resolution which have not been decided in the Methodist Episcopal Church. One is this: Has the General Conference a right, or has it the power, to remove from office one, or all of the bishops, if they, under any circumstances, become disqualified to carry out the great principles of our itinerant general superintendency? The second is: Will the Methodist Church admit the great evil of slavery into the itinerant general superintendency? Now, sir, they never have done it; and if there should be one elected at this conference, he will not be a slaveholder. But I cannot, for my life, perceive the difference between continuing one of them in that office who has seen proper to connect himself with it, and voting directly to put one into it who holds slaves. It is the same principle. It will violate the constituted

law. It will injure, if not totally destroy, this vital organ of our itinerancy. This office requires work, sir, and hard work; and I care not what it is that would obstruct or interdict the circulation of this vital blood of our itinerancy—that bandage ought to be cut. There are many other circumstances which may trammel its operations. Sickness, old age, or an alienation of mind, would completely disqualify men from the exercise of this office. I do not believe the doctrine, once a bishop, always a bishop. I hold it as the doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that no man is to hold that office only so long as he is fully able to carry out its principles of general superintendency. I never shall forget, in 1836, on the General Conference floor at Cincinnati, that beloved man of God, the much lamented Bishop Roberts, who rose and tendered the resignation of the office of bishop; and what were his reasons? The first, sir, was, that his declining years and strength would not admit of his carrying out to the full extent this great principle of Methodism; the second was, that he was conscious that his mental powers were on the decline, and he wished to resign while he was sensible of this fact, lest he might arrive at some future point when he would not be so sensible of this, and thus injure the Church. Now, sir, here was a man that loved the Church and the great vital principle of itinerant general superintendency much more than he loved the office of bishop. I pray to God this office may always be filled with such men! But, sir, I think this principle is fully conceded, that this conference has the power. Then, sir, in passing this resolution, let us not be charged with acting out of our constitutional powers.

But, sir, it is plead here, in the case of Bishop Andrew, that the conservativeness of the Discipline fully covers his case. Now I wish to meet this argument. It has been reiterated again and again that the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church is conservative toward slavery. This assumption I most positively and emphatically deny. Methodism and the Methodist Discipline have always been, and are now, and I hope will be while the world stands, belligerent toward slavery, and have branded it in the forehead, so that all the world may see it as a *great evil*. Now, sir, how a grave body of ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church can hold that this great moral evil can be justified and sanctified by the Methodist Discipline, is a strange paradox to me. Any man who can say it is right for him to hold his fellow-being in bondage, and buy and sell him at pleasure, put him under an overseer, and *drive, whip, and half starve him*, and that this is connived at by the Methodist Church, I think must have a queer view of the Church and her Discipline. I now say, in my place, before God, that whenever the Methodist Episcopal Church shall sanction this doctrine, as much as I love her, I will leave it and seek another community. Now I say again, there is not one item in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church that has any conservative principle toward slavery as a great moral evil; yet I will say, sir, it has some conservativeness toward her ministers and members, who, through necessity, are connected with it, and cannot help themselves, and this conservativeness is clearly defined. Yes, sir, I repeat, clearly defined, so that none may be mistaken on this subject. And what is this conservativeness? It is this: when the master *cannot set his slave free* and that slave enjoy his freedom; when it is beyond the power of the master to free his slave, or that slave to enjoy his freedom, slavery is fixed on the absolute necessity of the case; and if there be any such case, it *could not and should not be called a sin*. But I hold that this conservativeness goes not one step further to extenuate any man from crime; as a slaveholder, it is the necessity of the case that saves him from crime. Now, sir, on this platform I stand before God, and on this I am not afraid to die and go to his judgment. By the southern men I am taunted with being an abolitionist. So I am, sir, in the Methodist sense of that word; but none can say that I am a radical-abolitionist. I throw back the assertion with perfect contempt. By those rabid abolitionists I am called a pro-slavery man, and I treat this with the same disregard. I am a Methodist. I stand on the ground that my fathers in Methodism took, the great Wesley, Coke, Asbury, M'Kendree, and the venerable men of the old western conferences, the Youngs, Laken, Collins, Burk, Parker, Axley, Sale, and others, and from this ground I will not move. I stand here as the representative of one of the largest annual conferences. My brethren have confided to my colleagues and myself the great principles of our Methodist confederacy and the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Now, sir, if I would compromise these great principles, and return home to meet the people and preachers of my own conference—than whom I believe there are not a purer and more honourable or devoted set of ministers in the world—I would deserve to be branded with the name

of Judas on my forehead. But, sir, it shall never be said of James B. Finley, nor cast up to my children or grandchildren, Your ancestor was a traitor to the high trust confided to him by his brethren in the ministry and membership.

Before I close this speech, I must answer some things which have been stated on this floor. The first is this: that, in the infant state of Methodism, the slaves could be set free in every state of the Union; but whenever the Methodist Church began to take action against slaveholding, the states began to make laws to contravene their freedom. Now, sir, I ask, what was it that first moved the Church to this course? The Church always considered it a great evil, and had some hope that the preaching of the Gospel would eventually effect much toward its destruction. Then the preachers were free from slavery themselves; then they could, and did, preach against it, and the cause of the poor slave was taking deep root in the public mind. Then preachers began to connect themselves with this great evil, and the other preachers thought it was time to do something to prevent it, believing that the connecting of slavery with the ministry would rivet the chains of slavery the tighter; while, if the ministry was kept free from it, their example and teachings would be a great means of bringing it to an end. In taking this ground, some of the states passed acts to fine ministers for preaching against it—I have a witness there before me, my old friend brother Cartwright, who, with our worthy fathers, fought against this great evil. I recollect my worthy old friend, Rev. David Young, who, in the days of his youth, and for his eminent talents, and fearless course in defence of the institutions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was, by the Rev. Dr. Bond, in former days, called the western war-horse, he, sir, was fined for preaching against this great evil; and Methodist preachers used to preach against it, and many of these very slaveholders would take and feed us. This, sir, is the true state of the case.

Now, sir, to answer a few more things that have been urged, and I am done. It has been argued that they hold slaves out of charity to them. Sir, I am at a great loss to know what sort of charity this is, to hold a fellow-creature in bondage, and make him work hard all his life, and appropriate all his labour to the master's use, for charity to the poor slave; to buy and sell him as we do animals, is a queer charity to me, just such as I pray to God may never be exercised toward me. Again, it is said we treat them as we do our children. Now, sir, I ask, do those brethren teach their children that it is better to be slaves than freemen? Do they put their children into the field and set overseers over them? Do they clothe and feed these slaves as they do their own children? Do they teach them to read the Bible, and qualify them to be useful citizens? I leave all these answers for others.

I never will agree that slavery shall be connected in any way with episcopacy, nor anywhere else only by necessity. I must state again, that from this principle I never will be removed. If I fall alone, it shall be at my post, and I am sure I shall have the blessing of my constituents; and it will be said by them, with very few exceptions, He was worthy of the trust committed to him. I will be greeted, when this great question is decided, let it go which way it may, by those of the membership and ministry in my own country. Now, that my opponents may not have it to say that I was obstinate and unyielding, I will say, that if anything can be proposed that will harmonize this matter without compromising the principle, I will go for it; but I never will compromise the principle—brethren who know me, know I will not. I, too, am a southerner by birth. My parents were slaveholders; but, at an early day, they were so convinced of the evil of slavery, and of the baneful influence it must have on their children, that my father at once freed himself and his children of this curse. After having raised a crop of corn on the Scioto, then the northwestern territory, he committed to me, then only fifteen years old, all his slaves, for which he was offered six thousand dollars, and I moved them to that place, and there we dug troughs, pounded hommony, killed racoons, opossums, deer, and bears, and then they were left to manage for themselves. So, sir, you see if others have been in swamps, I have been too; if others have fed on racoons, I too have, and am not a whit behind any of you in this matter. Having thus expressed my position fearlessly, but I trust with no bad feeling toward any brother, on the ground which I believe the Church has always occupied, I take my seat, and shall wait the issue with as much composure and prayer as I am capable of.

Mr. Sehon said,—In as subdued a manner, and with a heart as deeply affected as the importance of the occasion demands, do I approach this subject. Especially so, in view of the very interesting, and, to your speaker, satisfactory remarks of the venerable speaker (Bishop Andrew) who has just taken his seat. It has not been

for want of a deep and heartfelt interest in the issue of the very important question now before the conference that I have not before spoken. No, sir; but as a young man, and for the first time a member of the General Conference, I have waited patiently to hear the arguments and views of older and more experienced brethren. Hence I properly appreciated both the source, temper, and spirit of the kind suggestion made by our worthy superintendent, Bishop Soule, in the commencement of the discussion on this subject. Now, after the lapse of many days, and when much has been said on both sides, I feel it my imperative duty to state the reasons which will govern me in the vote I am about to give. And here let me say, sir, that I may not be misunderstood—in the very commencement of my remarks—that I am opposed to the substitute now under consideration; yea, to the original preamble and resolution altogether. It is true, in the commencement of the session, and before any action in the conference on the case, I had been in favour of the resignation of Bishop Andrew; had so expressed myself in convention of the delegates from the non-slaveholding states, and privately to my friends. But since the letter of the bishop has been laid before the conference, and from the first introduction of the substitute, I have thought a *forcible* resignation, such as I view that asked in this resolution, should not be pressed upon him. If a plan of conciliation can be proposed—milder measures named—by which a compromise in this case can be effected, I shall most heartily come to their support. But when we are told, to comply with the request in this resolution would be impracticable, even if the slaves were legally his own, and unjust and wrong toward his wife and her children; and again, by speakers on both sides, that the passage of the resolution would undoubtedly injure the Church in the south, if not prove her dismemberment—why should we press it? On this subject I am peculiarly and delicately situated. My own aged and venerable father is a slaveholder. I myself was born and reared in Virginia, amid the institutions of slavery; but at an early period in my ministry I was transferred to a free state, (Ohio,) where I have since held my residence, and where I wish to live and die. Yet coming, as I do, from a non-slaveholding state, for good and valid reasons to myself, I am opposed to the proposed measure. I have said that much evil would be the result of the passage of this substitute—evil both to the white and slave population of the south. It would be looked upon as extra-judicial action by us—as a departure from the uniform course of the Church heretofore on the exciting subject of slavery. Why has the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church continued so long? Why has she been pointed at as a model for other churches in legislation upon this subject? Because, by her action, she has *never* interfered with the civil institutions and regulations of any section of our common country. Ever pronouncing slavery an evil, yet, when the laws make emancipation impracticable, making provision for the protection of the membership and official standing of the slaveholder. It is upon ground like this I stand, not, as I may be charged, from a sudden conversion to *southern principles*. No, sir; I am governed by doctrines which I have maintained from my first entrance into the ministry unto the present hour; doctrines such as I publicly assented to in the report of the Ohio Conference in 1835—such as I have expressed in letters written by me from the south in the winter of 1841 and 1842, and which were so grossly perverted in the "Watchman." For these opinions, thus expressed, ultra abolitionism has made war upon me, and even, in one or two instances, pulpits have been closed against me. Yet, notwithstanding all this, I am no friend to slavery, and practically became an abolitionist, proving my faith by my works, by emancipating perhaps as many slaves as any brother upon the floor of the conference. But I *now* have my serious doubts, although I acted from principles of justice and humanity in giving them their freedom, whether I have truly improved their condition. A gentleman from Ohio, now in the city, has just informed me that they are now dependant upon the kind charities of the community in which they lived, the husband and father having basely fled and left them helpless and in want, he never before having been bound to support them.

Let us again, for a moment, look at what is proposed in the resolution now before the conference. It is virtually the removal of Bishop Andrew from the episcopacy. Now, sir, as to the authority of this General Conference to remove or expel a bishop, I have never for a single moment doubted; nor do I now remember to have heard it doubted on the floor of this conference. But is this to be done in the informal manner now proposed in this substitute? Is this a trial? Have the charges and specifications been spread before the conference? Has the evidence been adduced? No, sir; no such thing is pretended. If we are to depose a

bishop, let us have an open, fair, and full trial, that whether the object be gained or not, we, as a conference, at least, may stand acquitted before the bar of our common country from having acted in a manner which may be pronounced unjust and illegal. If upon such charge, improper conduct can be proved upon the bishop, I will for one faithfully and impartially perform my duty. But shall we, upon a mere question of expediency, proceed in this summary manner to depose a bishop? Why, sir, well may we pause in view of the dreadful and fearful consequences which must ensue, when, sir—I dread too, with others, to pronounce a word which grates harshly upon my ear, and deeply pains my heart—the division of our beloved Church must be the inevitable result. And why do brethren demand this? What is the plea for this expediency? Because, say they, Bishop Andrew has rendered himself unacceptable to a large portion of the Church. Whence, sir, and how do we know this fact? Have we been instructed on this subject? Have we been directed as to the course we should pursue? No. Let us, then, rather hear from the Church, the whole Church, their opinions upon this important subject. I will venture, however, here in my place to say, that in Cincinnati, in Philadelphia, in New-York, in New-Jersey, and in other non-slaveholding sections of our country, where all the circumstances and facts in this case are made known, Bishop Andrew would be greeted, as he ever has been, with a most warm and hearty reception, and listened to with gratified and delighted interest. I know that I occupy in these remarks highly-responsible ground, but from the most honest convictions of my mind these opinions are expressed. Once more: I am opposed to the expediency plead for, because the passage of this resolution will most effectually close the door, the now open door of Gospel privileges, to the poor slave himself. In view, then, of these results, let me beseech brethren to pause, before, by their vote, the south shall be severed, and these disastrous consequences come upon us. I am bound to *that south* by the strongest possible ties; the graves of my ancestry are there, it is the land of brave men, who lived and died for our country's liberty. But I give way to others who I see are waiting, and more able to do justice to the subject, by thanking you for your attention, and saying, with a purity of purpose and conscious integrity of soul, I am willing to meet my people while I stand acquitted at the bar of my own conscience, and will, I firmly believe, stand acquitted before the great tribunal of heaven at the last day.

Dr. Winans followed. Although quite unprepared, fatigued with labour, and in feeble health, he felt it an imperative duty to make a few remarks. The conference had a guaranty in his previous practice that he would not detain them long, and he would earnestly beg their attention while he should present a correct view of the fundamental doctrines of the Discipline applicable to the present case. He would call attention to the speech of brother Hamline, of the Ohio Conference, particularly the third proposition, regarding the administrative powers of the General Conference. He would not dispute with the brother either with regard to the legislative powers of the General Conference, or on the point that the General Conference is the supreme authority of the Methodist Church. He would concede the latter point if it means that the General Conference has the highest appellate jurisdiction, and is the only judicial authority before which a bishop can be ultimately arraigned. Another proposition, he considered, amounted to about this; that the administrative powers of the General Conference were absolute and unlimited, except so far as restrained by the restrictive resolutions of the Discipline. He would beg to be corrected if he should make any misstatement.

Mr. Hamline wished the brother to proceed with his remarks, and not look to him for any correction till he had done his argument.

Dr. Winans continued. The brother might rest assured as positively as if written in characters of fire on the speaker's heart, that he would not intentionally do him injustice. Although from his unfortunate understanding of the proposition, he might be fighting a man of straw, he would buffet it with all his might, for on that ground was based every argument of the brother bearing on the case of Bishop Andrew. Did the General Conference possess this plenary administrative power? No, emphatically. Properly speaking, the General Conference, as such, possesses not a particle of original administrative power. All the administrative power it does possess is conferred upon it by its own action in another capacity. It is purely a creature having delegated attributes, and none others. What are these delegated powers? They are few, and exceedingly simple. Where are they found? Where every Methodist ought to look, in the book of Discipline—not in abstract reasoning or metaphysical sophistications. It would not tax the patience of the brethren to

permit him to read them. "The General Conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church," and that is the whole of her power. Her administrative power was to be found solely in the rules and regulations which she had made. It was right it should be so. God forbid that the majority of this conference should be invested with plenary power to be used at will! ["Amen," "Amen."] There would be immense hazard in allowing the General Conference to exercise discretionary, absolute authority, by means of the majority. Well, then, applying this matter to the point at issue, the only rule that can be relied upon in the present case is this: the General Conference may expel a bishop for improper conduct if they deem it necessary. Beyond or apart from this rule they have no power or authority to touch the subject of Bishop Andrew's position. If they have the power to expel a man, it does not follow that they have a right to suspend or reprove him. To admit this would be throwing the door of discretion wide open. On the contrary, the General Conference have no power to suspend, depose, or reprove a bishop. There was good reason why it should be so. What an anomaly would be a deposed, reprov'd, dishonoured bishop! To send abroad into the world the responsible head of the Church clothed with infamy, would be an outrage upon all decency and propriety—would strike at the very foundations of the Church. If Bishop Andrew had been guilty of improper and censurable conduct, in the name of Methodism let him be expelled. The conference could do no more. Inferred powers were always dangerous, hazardous, ruinous. And what was understood by improper conduct? What the rule by which to judge of it? Was it a brother's opinion, or the aggregate of all their opinions? The time had been, and might come again, when it would be judged improper conduct in a bishop not to wear a surplice, or not to adorn his temples with a tiara after a particular fashion.

It was one of the strongest arguments of the brother from Baltimore that the conduct of Bishop Andrew had excited discontent. Therefore, it was improper—a very curious mode of reasoning, indeed—a manner of arriving at a conclusion not taught in any man's philosophy, but growing out of the emergency of the occasion—the extreme pressure of the brother's feeling. Admit its propriety, and it would only be necessary for a few agitators—and the world and the Church always had them—to raise an excitement now and then, to kindle an infernal blaze which should scorch the very vitals of religion, and burn the heart of the Church. Could brethren look this matter fully, fairly, and candidly in the face, and not take back the ground on which rested the impropriety of Bishop Andrew's conduct? The speaker would not dare to meet the proposition in any intelligent society. It would cover him with confusion. Again, the brother had argued that the bishop was elected as a non-slaveholding man, and, forsooth, connecting himself with slavery was contrary to the practice and usages of the Church, and a very improper act. Really, there never yet had been a bishop chosen from Mississippi; still he would deny that it is against the usages of the Church to elect a bishop from Mississippi. But he would meet the brother a little closer. Did the brother know that the time was when a slaveholder came within one of being elected to the office of bishop? Did the brother know that a slaveholder, in 1832, received forty non-slaveholding votes, and if he had received perhaps fifty he would have been elected bishop? The fact is, there had been no usage in the matter. Bishop Andrew knew his rights, and understood the law, and was open to its regular operations—he understood the Discipline, which is a little more liberal than the brother from Baltimore, who is to have a general legislation for all Methodist preachers, and a special legislation for the bishops. The law applicable to a travelling preacher was applicable to a bishop, and he desired to be shown how it was not, not by inference or induction, but by putting their finger on the point. Slaveholders had been making concessions from time immemorial. The south had conceded to the north, and the interests of the south had been cramped more and more from General Conference to General Conference; yet they had borne it, rather than depart from the unity of the Church. It was their principle to yield to the utmost extent, rather than give over the unity of the Church; but they were now brought to a point beyond which they could not go without ruinous consequences. The majority in this case were like the cuckoo, that insinuates itself into the nest of the smaller birds. The brethren at the south must meet the question before them with solemn declarations, that they do not stand connected with that abolition body called the Methodist Episcopal Church. He could not sympathize with the brother who had called himself an abolitionist on the floor of this conference. For what did abolitionists seek and pray? Why, that, contrary to the provisions of the Discipline,

the Methodist Episcopal Church should have no slaveholding bishop. Notwithstanding abolitionists, he would claim and demand the right for the south. But the conference were going even further than the abolitionists prayed they should go. They were going to divest a bishop of his office, and that, too, not because he, as a bishop, had violated the Discipline, but simply because he was connected with slavery; and there would be a shout raised as loud as the few ultra abolitionists could raise, whenever the General Conference passed this resolution. It would be because their designs would then be secured, and he would defy any abolitionist on this floor to deny it.

A member.—“Mr. President, I deny it.”

Another.—“So do I.”

Mr. Winans responded.—That was enough. He wished for no argument. He meant just what he said. He cared not if they did deny it. It was as plain as if written with a sunbeam in the heavens. He could not forgive the Baltimore delegation. Why? Simply because they claimed conservatism. Conservatism of what? Conservatism of the Discipline? No: they were immolating the Discipline on the altar of abolitionism. Conservatism of the episcopacy? No: they had bound hand and foot one of their bishops, and intended to sacrifice him. Conservatism of Methodism? of the union of the Church? They were plunging a dagger into the very vitals of that union. He *could* not forgive them, unless they would take back the assumption of conservatism. In what were they conservatists? Why, they were conservatists of abolition, and they must either take back their claim to conservatism of the Discipline, or he could not forgive their inconsistency. He loved the Baltimore Conference, (the speaker here reviewed his personal connection with that conference in his earlier days, and at the commencement of his ministry, and continued,) but when *they* took him by the beard to kiss him, and then plunged a poisoned dagger into his breast, he must say it was too bad; it was the unkindest cut of all, and he could not help exclaiming, “*Et tu Brute!*” He should not quarrel with the Baltimore delegation if they gave their vote as they ought to vote, according to the immutable laws of justice. He would never believe their conservatism, while they crushed the south, and drove them to an independent existence, as drive they would. He had spoken too long, but if he had the strength he would protract the debate till January, rather than that they should be driven forth a ruined community—dissevered, destroyed, and gloried over by other denominations, who were more prudent in these matters than themselves.

The conference soon afterward adjourned until half-past three.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Mr. Cartwright said, after some playful allusions to the wide range taken by many of the speakers during the discussion,—I had intended asking pardon of this conference for alluding to the subject at all, for I am sure none of the other speakers touched it, or came within forty miles of it. Now, sir, I presume, from the long and able debates—and there have been since yesterday morning some tolerably respectable speeches—that the constitutionality of our proceeding is the main question; for the statutes and laws have been brought in and reviewed, from the private member up to the honourable bench of bishops; and my purpose now is, more especially, in some little way and manner, to contribute to disabuse the minds of the members of this conference of some of the round assertions, as well as heterodox doctrines, made and propagated on this floor. Now, sir, I believe it has been the order, and I must be borne with a little if I follow it, to open the speeches by telling one's experience. I like this sort of meeting first rate. Brother Green used up all the capital I's in the English language, and when I search for one or two, I come at missing them. But a word to him; for I think, from his own account, he is a tremendous man! He's not afraid of Indians, panthers, wild-cats, nor nothing of the sort. I admire his courage; but his religious experience was not so clever, after all. Now, it so happens, by a strange chain of circumstances, that I stand before you to-day, unworthy as I am, as one among the old preachers who joined the Western Conference in 1805. That was the seventh conference the Methodists held in this country. Well, the debates and speeches which have been on this floor, and the debates in the controversy about Methodist law and usage, have brought to my mind some of my most early recollections on that subject; and they are not painful, but pleasant. I was born (here the speaker expressed a hope that some “brother would not get his dander up,” but an interruption prevented the reporter catching the point of the remark) in Amherst

county, on James River. From there I migrated into Kentucky, among these bears, and panthers, and wildcats, and Indians, that my friend talked about. I know all about them; and if he had had to stand as I have stood, in open fields, with Indians shooting from behind every tree in the neighbourhood, he would have quailed, I think; but may be not—that's not important. The first Methodist preacher I ever heard, or have any recollection of, died not long since in the south, and was known favourably to the brethren there, I have no doubt. He baptized me. Now, sir, I will say, that in all my long years of relation to, and acquaintance with, Methodist and Methodist preachers, I never heard one who did not oppose slavery from stem to stern. And they did it in all good conscience, privately and publicly. And as reference was made yesterday, by the speaker who quoted Emory's work, to the unsettled state of this question, I want it to be remembered, that, at that early day, and through all the squabbles and difficulties through which the Church waded, there was not an advocate for slavery to be found among Methodist preachers.

I will not turn politician, and talk about the rights of man; nor will I give my political opinions. If I did they would be different from those of the brother from Virginia. Again: if we have, in the economy of our Church, rules and regulations by which we can manage all the officers of the Church until we come up to the bishops, and then have no law, as was argued to-day, but the act of expulsion, we are in a deplorable fix. You are all familiar with the rules and regulations about class-leaders, exhorters, and licentiates, and the unprofitableness of travelling preachers. Well, now, I conceive by virtue of the office, if one of our superintendents was known to be unacceptable and unprofitable, it is our imperative duty to remove him from office, and the Discipline gives the power. If we can regulate the whole machinery, and have not power to touch a bishop when he comes upon the table, I say we are in a deplorable fix indeed. Now it has been wrongly affirmed that reproof, censure, or suspension, are all out of the law. I differ in opinion, but if I am wrong, and my brother is right, I think it is high time there was one, and I go for it. I never was a great favourite with the bishops, but I like them: they have always treated me better than I deserved, considering me as Peter Cartwright. I have no great cause to complain, and never had. I remember Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat, and received appointments from them, and they never afflicted me; I was always ready to go anywhere, and could make a bad circuit a good one on a push, when they put me there. I have no spite against any bishop, and need not stop to vent my feelings. I never had anything against Bishop Andrew; but this does not alter my mind in this matter, and I will forbear noticing his pacific relation to slavery; I will do this in view of the information of this large and respectable body of ministers. But while I do this, I must beg leave to repudiate the heretical doctrines advanced by southern men on this floor, that if you take a man in the south and elect him without slaves, he is liable to become a slaveholder, and he cannot get rid of it. Why, my dear sir, this is all humbuggery, and nothing else. It was once my misfortune to become by heirship the owner of slaves. I could have plead with truth, and certainty of sympathetic responses, the disabilities of the law: but no, sir, I did not do so; I shouldered my responsibility, and resolved to be, like Cesar's wife, beyond suspicion. I took them to my state, set them free, gave them land, and built them a house, and they made more money than ever I did by my preaching. I only name this as a set off against the old superannuated things palmed on us by brother Green; and I stand at this day security for more than two hundred negroes, whom I helped to set free. The law requires that you become security, and righteous is the law; and some of the brethren who looked somewhat to the fleshpots of Egypt, hesitated about manumission because of this required security, and I stepped in and took the responsibility. I thank God that I ever did so. I have seen some of them since, and they are respectable men, and will continue so as long as they live in the world.

Now it is painful to me to hear the southern brethren persist in one assertion, and I fling it back with righteous resentment;—that every man who will not chime in with their opinions is an abolitionist, and that if this resolution prevails we become an abolition Church. If such be the sense in which they take it, I beg leave to inform their royal honours it is not true. Thank God, I have no such blood in my veins. I stand on the platform of old Methodism. I hope this was only a flourish, and not intended to take any advantage. But be that as it may, I take this opportunity of saying it is not one word true. Well, I want brethren not to go hanging their lips, and get afraid of the glow of a muckworm; for we have seen

and heard all this thunder and lightning before, and the world is not come to an end yet. We are not going to take the world by storm, and know nothing of those magazines of powder that our brother talked of. Why, he must be afraid of ghosts, and would be afraid to walk alone of a dark night. Talk of a division! I hope we shall hear no more of this sickly talk. I do not believe in a division, and have not from the first. Why, this Methodist Episcopal Church would not miss me any more than an ox would miss a fly off his horn. Well, I have enjoyed myself during all this talk; sometimes you have made me laugh, and sometimes you have made me cry; I have been glad and sorry, and sometimes I have knocked about from side to side, and determined I would not cry any more; then some old fellow has got hold of me, and I have gone ahead again.

But now, sir, I wanted to make some remarks on the false positions taken here. The venerable names of sainted ministers and bishops have been lugged in to give support and countenance to the principle of the right of slaveholders to the episcopacy. I may say here, "A miss is as good as a mile." One man came within one vote, but then he was not a bishop. It has been said, Bishop M'Kendree intended to have purchased one. Now I have only to say, that I have heard him say, five hundred times, that if he owned a thousand slaves he would not die a slaveholder—he would set them free. This doctrine he taught me when I was a beardless boy, and when I was a presiding elder. Now my brother talked about his tremendous disposition. He'd fight any way—on his feet, or on his knees, or on his back, and wouldn't yield no how you could fix it. Well, I've no disposition to fight that brother. He'll find plenty to do, however. I was a little amused at my learned friend from Georgia, a Christian and a gentleman I believe, but he diverted me with his Latin that he had quoted. It brought to my mind a little anecdote about a fellow somewhere in the Georgia swamps, who had been elected to some little office in the country—police officer or constable—and he had to serve a writ upon some man, who, when pursued, gave him the dodge and plunged into one of the swamps. The constable did not like to follow him there, so he returned his writ, with this explanation: "*In swampum et non comeatum.*" I want to pay my respects to the little learned brother that would not disturb the hair on the head of a bald-headed man. What I want to come at is this. We sometimes get warm and heated in debate. As to my temperament, I am cool, and deliberate, and good humoured. But you know, sir, in the course of this debate we have been threatened. Now I don't like this. I never myself threaten, except when I am in a bad temper; and a man that is a man is not going to be scared because I threaten him. Now, we have been threatened with a division, and with protests, that should be couched in language that should burn upon our cheeks before the American people, and American Church! These big fellows I never did like in my life. I have heard a deal of fuss about these American fixtures. Every little bobbing, squeaking thing, likes to come upon us as an accredited American something. Who are the American people? Why those whose fathers fought, and bled, and gained our liberties; and are we afraid of our doings going before them? I desire they should go. I do think that, although the brother has great moral, and mental, and physical, and intellectual courage, yet I shall venture to pronounce his eulogy. I love the brother, and I love him well; but I have no wish that he should drive, as the old fellow drove his swine, and I had it in my mind to say to him, David slew the lion, the bear, and Goliath—Samson slew the Philistines, Alexander conquered the world, but you, sir, have excelled them all. It has been said, that all this speaking, writing, and legislating has never procured the emancipation of one slave. Now I am proud to know that is a capital mistake.

Now I say that we have our rights and privileges as well as others, and brethren gain nothing by kicking me off and another off, and throwing us into company that they are pleased to call disgraceful, because of their undue agitation of any subject. It has been alleged that the abolition movement has done incalculable mischief. I heard a venerable bishop once say, in reference to that agitation, that reaction was the safety-valve of the world. I beg to say that there is not a feeling in my heart friendly to slavery, and I go anything in reason, where the laws of the Church are not violated; but when they tell me it is none of my business, and that I have no right to intermeddle in the matter, I beg to enter my protest against the doctrine. I know that from the ultra agitation in the north much mischief resulted, but the stain is not on my skirts. And I have no doubt men have taken their colour from the ultras both north and south. A word or two in reference to New-York. I was opposed to bringing the conference here, but I came

here to represent one of the annual conferences that raised this barrier against this rank abolitionism. A word for the Baltimore Conference. I have felt for them. I have seen the design in the attacks made upon them, and could not help seeing it. I hope these brethren will not suffer themselves to be scared out of their principles. Who does not know that the Baltimore Conference is an old Methodist ground, and deserves to have her name written in capital letters of gold. But the brother says he cannot forgive them. Nay, I take that back—I hope they will never need it, and will go to heaven without. I know their relation to slavery and their difficulties, but in spite of all the efforts, eloquence, and power of the prosecuting attorney general, they came out unsinged and without the smell of fire upon them. May they live for ever!

Mr. Crandall moved that the debate be closed, and the vote on the question be taken, at half-past five o'clock this afternoon. Bishop Andrew had desired them, in a way that was calculated to make an impression on their minds, to bring this matter to an end, and observed that he had been hung up long enough. Out of respect to him, it ought to be done. Some on both sides wished still to speak, it was true, but unless they got their business done they would soon be without a quorum of members. He was ready to vote at the close of the bishop's address that morning, and there never was a moment when there would have been less votes on his side than at that time. That was followed by two speeches from southern members, but he was willing at any time to have voted. They had now, it was true, had two speeches on the other side, which had tended to cool them down and make them deliberate a little more, but he presumed that neither side would complain of that.

Mr. Early moved that the resolution lie on the table, which was lost.

Dr. Capers supposed that the vote indicated very decidedly that they should not have much longer time to discuss the question. He never knew a question before the General Conference which he so earnestly desired should be patiently and lengthily discussed. It was not in his nature to be an alarmist, and certainly not in his religion, but he would say that he did most conscientiously regard the situation of the Church to be a most painful one, and that the Church herself was in immediate danger of secession or schism, call it what they would. He deemed it of vast importance, and that it would benefit the Church, to have the matter clearly and fully discussed. An alarming evil threatened the southern churches, and they wanted all the help they could get in trying to ward it off. The question must be allowed to be one of vast and most momentous interest. Since the beginning of the debate he had desired to speak upon it, not merely because he desired to be heard, but because he had a solemn conviction that it was his duty. There were several others in the same position. A venerable friend from South Carolina had not obtained the floor, though he desired it much. He (Dr. C.) should have liked to have given his testimony had a convenient opportunity presented itself, but he could not scuffle for the floor, and he had been pained and grieved by seeing a dozen claiming the floor at once. True, they had had a great deal of discussion, valuable discussion, but the subject was not exhausted. He begged to call the attention of the mover to this seemingly fair proposition, and to remind him that although the question seemed to involve only two sides or parties, those two were very differently circumstanced, being but fifty-two on one side and one hundred and twenty-eight on the other. This was the true position of the matter. In other circumstances the vote might be pressed, but when the minority were so perfectly in the hands of the majority, it was scarcely a right thing. The minority, however, were in their hands, and must submit.

Mr. Collins inquired if the motion was in order? It was equivalent to the previous question.

Bishop Waugh said the General Conference had no rule or express provision on the subject. He supposed that if there were no question upon it raised by the conference, it would have been practicable to put the motion. Now that the point of order was raised, he confessed his inability to decide. Usage and analogy would decide that it was out of order.

After consulting with his colleagues, the president said two of them were doubtful upon the subject. He should decide that it was out of order. If any one appealed against that decision, the conference must decide.

Mr. Houghtaling appealed, and the conference supported the decision of the chair, the number in the affirmative being one hundred and three.

Mr. Stamper then addressed the conference. He said he entered with diffidence

on the discussion of this vexed question, especially as many were becoming wearied with the protracted debate. He felt a deep interest in the subject, and it had greatly afflicted him since it had been introduced. There was nothing that he viewed, not even death itself, in a more forbidding aspect than schism, or division, in that body. He was born within the pale, and reared under the instructions of the Methodist Church, and had been taught to look up to its ministers with especial veneration. That Church had been his home while he was a wanderer in the world, and he felt as though he would rather die than see division, if his death could prevent it. Every point of the subject had been touched and enlarged upon; but still he felt as though he could not go home without giving his testimony to what he believed to be righteous principles.

He was opposed to the substitute, because he believed it was an extra-judicial proceeding. It sought to inflict a punishment that the law would not bear them out in. He formed this opinion from the plain and simple law, which had been termed there the compromise law. He had been taught by preachers from the north, east, south, and west, to regard that rule as the great ground of compromise between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding states, and he had heard nothing yet to convince him to the contrary. If the uniform and undivided sentiment of the Church had been to oppose slavery, law or no law, why was this rule introduced at all? He believed, from its very nature, and from the testimony of other men, that it was introduced to hush this perplexing question. Their fathers viewed it in that light. He (the speaker) never owned a slave, nor his father before him, and he never expected to own any. He was not a slavery man, and had always stood in that light; but at the same time he was not disposed to heap burdens on other men's shoulders, which they were unable to bear. It was found by actual experiment that they were unable to get along upon the ground first instituted. It was found that that course blocked up the way to emancipation, and fastened the chains still tighter upon the slave. Then this compromise law was introduced, and the Church had worked well on the plan for years and years, and had it not been for ultra abolitionism, they had still been doing well under the provisions of that law.

All parties agreed that slavery was a great evil; the difficulty was, how to dispose of this evil. Those in the south were opposed to any interference with the civil relations that exist between master and servant; but urged the preaching of the Gospel alike to master and slave, until they became enlightened and converted. This they believed to be the only safe course toward universal emancipation; and that in this way alone would it be effected, unless it were done by blood and wrong. If the master and slave got converted, the evil was half cured, inasmuch as the master's heart was filled with benevolence, and the slave being enlightened was prepared for liberty, without which his liberty would be but a poor boon. He contended that this was the course contemplated by the compromise law, and that it was being successfully wrought out, until abolition principles frustrated the good work. He had resided in a slaveholding state, and therefore knew how the matter stood; and that the influence of the Church was extending to this very point, until frustrated by the movement to which he had alluded. But for that Kentucky would have been a free state at this day. In almost every county of the state there were societies formed to prepare the negro population for freedom, and there were thousands of persons in that state who had signed an amendment to the constitution, to the effect that all slaves born in their families should be free in view of their colonization. The leading men had taken this in hand; but, in the midst of their career, ultra abolitionism came down upon them, and deferred that measure to an uncertain time. A great many of those who had been liberated had become mere serfs, and their condition was worse than before. And while ultra abolitionism had impeded the work of gradual emancipation in the south, it had done no good in the north. The speaker here adverted to the state of the coloured population in the cities of Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and others, and described the negroes as herding together in the lowest form of human degradation. At Cincinnati the citizens had been compelled to drive them by hundreds out of the city, and they were left homeless, unsheltered, unprovided for, and exposed to every hardship and injury, and they had wasted away like the snow before the rising sun; and if the principle of ultra abolitionism were to be acted upon, it would result in the destruction of the whole coloured race. The controversy was not as to slavery itself, but as to the best way of getting rid of it. The point of law had been already explained and presented in a plainer light than he could expect to

present it, and he should leave that where it was. But he must be opposed to the resolution, as to everything that tended to throw impediments in the way of their intercourse with their benighted coloured brethren. Now it did appear to him, that, if his conscience were as deeply concerned as some brethren had represented theirs to be, he should go out into the rice grounds and swamps, and preach the Gospel to those poor negroes, as the best way of reaching the hearts of both masters and slaves, and thus bettering the condition of the latter. This would be the work of God, and would have a much richer reward than the course they were at present pursuing; and let brethren be encouraged, for though the times seemed troublous, and the storm dark and lowering, God would yet make all things plain before them.

Mr. Dunwoody then took the floor; but the hour of adjournment having arrived, he deferred his address until the following day.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29.

Rule for the Previous Question.

Mr. Randall moved a suspension of the order of the day to enable him to offer a resolution in substance like the one which was adopted four years ago at the General Conference in Baltimore, after the conference had been in session some three or four weeks. The resolution is in effect as follows:—

“Resolved, That whenever, in the judgment of any member of the conference, the discussion of a subject shall have been sufficiently protracted, it shall be in order for him to move that the question be now taken, which motion shall be decided without debate, and if adopted by a majority, the question shall be taken first on the substitute, if there be one, secondly on the amendments, and finally on the main proposition.”

The speaker thought the resolution a very safe one, because, if the call was not satisfactory it would be voted down. It was evident something of the character of this resolution was needed, or would be needed before we get through with the business. The question had been thus far ably discussed, and he hoped it would continue to be ably discussed. He believed the discussion would do good here and everywhere; he therefore hoped the whole subject would be spread out before the community.

Mr. Murrah was opposed to suspending the order of business. In his view it was tantamount to the previous question, which always operated mischievously.

Mr. Crouch observed, that when the conference adjourned last evening, an important motion was before them, upon which action was not had. It seemed to him there was so close a connection between that resolution and the one which the brother was about to offer, that to introduce the brother's resolution would be entirely barring up the way to action on the motion then under consideration. For this reason he was opposed to suspending the order of the day just now.

Mr. Hamline hoped the brother was mistaken, and that the regular action of the conference would be interrupted only for a moment. The only method of checking debate was to move to lay the whole business on the table. But in most great bodies it was never customary to lay on the table anything which had been long and gravely discussed, and which involved important questions. He hoped the motion now made would be carried.

Dr. Bangs said it must be obvious that we must have some rule to bring us to a stand. The question had been debated for a week, and he wished to see the end of it. He was willing still to hear—perfectly willing that others should speak, but it did appear to him that they must bring this discussion to a close very soon, or otherwise they would be compelled to close the conference and do nothing. He hoped, therefore, that the motion would prevail. When a vote was called for by a majority of the conference, he believed it ought to be taken. But unless they had some rule by which they could arrest the debate, the minority might keep up this debate as long as they pleased, and the majority remain at sea without rudder to steer, or anchor to bring them up.

Mr. M'Mahan believed that putting a stop to the discussion of this question would be an act of injustice to some of the conferences, whose views had not been heard on the question. He was not desirous of making a speech himself, but there were others that wished to speak, and for their sakes he hoped that the motion would not prevail.

Mr. Winner believed that something ought to be done. The gentleman had

observed that many wished to speak. The same thing could as truly be said twenty days from this morning, and be as really true as it now was. If this was the reason now why no government should be cast over the matter, it would be an equally valid reason twenty days hence. Rather than be longer wearied and worried, without obtaining further light on the subject, they would forego the privilege of speech. The most of the conferences were undoubtedly satisfied; and indeed many of them thought, that so glorious, so brilliant a light had been shed upon the subject already, that they were quite blind with its glory!

Mr. Redman, of Missouri, said, that much more time had been consumed in settling little matters than in doing greater ones. He would therefore move that the motion to suspend the debate be laid on the table. *Lost.*

Mr. Drummond said, he had hardly spoken a word on the floor of the conference, but he would go for anything that would bring this interminable debate to a close. They had had arguments and light enough. Many conferences had not been heard from, yet the minority had occupied far the most time in the discussion. The minority had been very gently dealt with. Afternoon sessions had been put off to accommodate them.

Mr. Adams wished to know if it was proper to have these continual allusions to majorities and minorities?

Mr. Drummond said that he had only followed the course of all previous speakers.

Mr. Blake was opposed to suspending the order of the day. The discussion had already brought the majority to tears—to a legal repentance; and the prosecution of the discussion would bring them to evangelical conversion.

Mr. Davis observed, that if the order of the debate must be changed, they had better fall back upon the fifteen minute resolution. He desired to say something at a suitable time, but hoped he could say it in fifteen minutes.

Dr. Winans asked if it had come to this, that a portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church felt themselves pressed upon the very verge of a precipice, from which they were to be plunged into irretrievable ruin, by the action of a majority of that General Conference? Whatever brethren might say, such was the fact. The south would oppose the measure as long as she had power to contend against it, and not until overborne by the domination and tyranny of the majority would she submit. He opposed the resolution to suspend the order of conference, because it was oppressive. He would beseech every brother who regarded the interests of the Church to unite with him in opposing it.

Dr. Smith arose first to a point of order, and then announced his intention to keep the floor until the motion was withdrawn. He could talk on the question for days together,—he had a plenty of materials—he had the physical ability. The conference should gain no time by the resolution. He could talk even one solid week on the question. He had the floor, and he would do it.

Dr. Durbin inquired of the chair if the fifteen minute rule was not in force upon the present motion?

The chair replied in the affirmative.

Dr. Durbin—Then brother Smith will not be able to keep the floor quite as long as he has told us he would do, but will be under the necessity of giving some of the rest a share in the debate.

Dr. Smith thought the decision of the chair wrong, but he would not appeal. He would content himself with a few remarks on the resolution. Members had a constitutional right to a reasonable time in which to express their views on any or every subject of interest, inasmuch as they were the accredited representatives of the annual conferences. They were allowed to vote, but were to be denied the privilege of asserting their reasons for their vote. Was not this a direct violation of their chartered right?

Mr. Slicer said he should be willing to pass a resolution putting it in the power of two-thirds of the conference to close the debate, but in the present circumstances he should be opposed to giving that power to a bare majority.

Mr. Randall said he would accept the amendment suggested by Mr. Slicer, if the conference would allow the introduction of the resolution. He was for open and free discussion on every subject.

The order of the day was then suspended, when Mr. Randall presented his resolution, amended as proposed by Mr. Slicer.

Dr. Bangs immediately moved to strike out "two-thirds" and insert "a majority."

Mr. Early begged that the question might be settled immediately. If Dr. Bangs'

motion must prevail, let it prevail, although he for one was strongly opposed to it. It was not for himself that he desired the discussion to go on untrammelled. Brethren knew that he never made long speeches. He wished the privilege for other men, that they might tell the world what and why they think and act.

Mr. Finley called the gentleman to order.

Mr. Early.—I never saw my old friend out of humour before.

Mr. Finley.—I am not out of humour, brother.

Mr. Early.—Let any man, whose courage is as good as his, keep cool till it is time to vote.

Mr. Finley.—I am cool, sir.

Mr. Early.—I am glad to see it. When two-thirds want the question, let them have it.

Dr. Bangs had no desire to arrest any reasonable discussion; but the subject had already been discussed for eight days. All admitted that the greatest portion of the speaking had come from the minority. The majority had no disposition whatever to oppress the minority. He was sure no such disposition had been manifested: but the discussion should be brought to a close at some reasonable time. He believed not many new ideas were to be drawn from the subject. If the bishops could devise any way by which a compromise could be formed, so that all could meet on safe ground, he hoped it would be done. He was not tenacious even about having a majority; and, under the circumstances, in order to accommodate the brethren, he would withdraw his proposed amendment.

The resolution was adopted.

Bishop Andrew's Case resumed.

The conference then took up the resolution which was under consideration at the time of adjournment yesterday, giving leave to Bishop Soule and his colleagues to address the conference in the case of Bishop Andrew, if they saw fit, when Mr. Dunwoody, who was entitled to the floor, had concluded his remarks.

This resolution was offered after a remark from Bishop Soule that he desired an opportunity to speak upon the question.

After some discussion, the resolution was laid upon the table, on the ground, as was understood, that it was entirely unnecessary. The vote having been declared,

Bishop Soule said he should consider it as an indication of the wish of the General Conference that he should not speak upon the question. He received the decision respectfully, and should cheerfully withhold the remarks he had intended to offer.

Several members who had voted to lay the resolution upon the table, declared that they had done so, not to prevent the bishops from speaking, but for the reason that they did not wish, by implication, to decide that they had not a right to speak whenever they chose to do so. After some further discussion, the vote by which the resolution was laid on the table was reconsidered, and then the resolution was passed by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Dunwoody, from South Carolina, rose and said, that this was the eighth General Conference he had attended, and he had never sat so long at any General Conference as at this one. Although he attended the conference, he did not intend to make a speech at all, and the reason of it was this. About four days after the conference he was taken sick, and was confined to his room for a week, and was apprehensive that he would be unable to take any part in the proceedings. Another reason was, there was so much idle talking and debating among the members of the conference, he thought it would be useless for himself to make any attempt to deliver his sentiments; and a third reason was, that it was so hard to get an opportunity of delivering one's sentiments, that he had come to the conclusion of not attempting it. But as an opportunity was now given to him, he felt it his duty to speak upon a question of so much importance as the present confessedly was. In addition to what he had already said, there was one obligation among others which strongly urged him to speak to the question now before the conference. He knew the subject of slavery would come up in some shape or other; and as he was a southern man, he believed it was expected he would defend the rights of the south, as he understood them. Otherwise he should have staid away altogether from the conference; but, as matters had taken the turn they had, he did not feel at liberty to decline coming here.

The debate had taken a very wide range, and therefore he should be obliged to take considerable range too, but he would say nothing that did not relate to the

form a part of that body. There was another consideration in which this question was to be viewed. It appeared that that conference intended that they were not to hold slaves at all. He concluded by referring to the relation between man and wife, and asked, where was there a more interesting relation? The resolution now before the conference went to sap that relation, and not only that, but to rend their Church in twain, if such events should be brought about by a reckless majority, and the south were driven to desperation. There were men enough in the south who would direct their proceeding, and they would trust to God to settle the difficulty.

Bishop Soule rose and said,—I do not know but this may be a favourable moment for me to offer to the conference the few remarks I desire to make before final action shall be had on the subject which is now pending before the conference. I have had no solicitude with regard to the period of time when I should offer these remarks, only that it might be a time of calmness and reflection. I will indulge the hope that this is such a time, and therefore avail myself of the opportunity. I rise, sir, at this moment, as I once said before, with all the calmness which the occasion I think requires. But this is not the calm that precedes the tempest and the storm; it is not the calmness of indifference; it cannot be. It is, sir, the calmness of conviction. It is the calmness of principle. If indeed I could be persuaded that my very respectable brother from the Pittsburg Conference was entirely correct in his opinion, that all the light which could be furnished on this subject had been furnished, I should not rise here. There is a possibility that the brother may be mistaken. I cannot say that I should have forborne to rise though I had been convinced of the correctness of the judgment of the respected brother from New-England, that though we should sit here till January next, no brother would be changed in his vote on this question. I say—I do not know that I should have forborne my observations though I might have been convinced of the correctness of this opinion; but if no more *light* could be produced, anything that I could say would be unavailing.

There are periods, sir, in the history of the life of every man who sustains any important station in society, who holds any important relations to it, when his individual character cannot, must not, be neutralized by the laws of association. Under this view, in what I shall say to this conference, I involve no man in responsibility. My venerable colleagues are in no way concerned in what I shall say to this conference, so that however I may be involved they are not involved. The south, on my right, is not involved. The north, on my left, is not involved. I stand in this regard alone. I hope not, indeed, alone in the sentiments that I shall express to the conference. Brethren have manifested a solicitude to bring this question to an issue—to close the debate and come to the vote. I ask brethren if it is not possible, notwithstanding the time which has been employed in this discussion, notwithstanding the enlarged views which brethren have expressed on the question before them,—I ask if it is not possible that action on the resolution may not yet be premature? Society, sir, whether civil or religious, has much more to fear from the passions of its members, than it has to fear from calm investigation and sober inquiry. I am not afraid to meet the calmness of deliberation anywhere. I am not afraid to meet it here; I am not afraid to meet it in the annual conference; I am not afraid to meet it before the great religious community of which we are members and ministers. I am not; but I fear the rage of the passions of men. I fear excitements—ardent excitements, prematurely produced in society; and I apprehend that if we trace the history of associations, whether civil or ecclesiastical, we shall find that these premature excitements, waking up the rage of passion, have produced greater calamities than ever were produced by the calmness of deliberation and the sobriety of inquiry, however extensive those investigations may have been. The sound of the trumpet of alarm may go forth from within these consecrated walls—the sound may spread itself on the wings of the wind, or of the whirlwind, over the length and breadth of these lands; but, sir, when this sound shall have died away, when the elements which may have been awakened to boisterous and tumultuous action, shall subside into the calmness of inquiry and reason, a voice may return to this hall, wafted on a counterbreeze; and though the voice be not heard in the thunder, the earthquake, or the storm, it may pierce through the veil of our speculations, and of our theories, and the first sound will be heard in the inquiry, '*What is the cause?*' Well, sir, it will be the province of reason and sobriety to answer. Hear it is, sir, spread out before me, spread out before you, in a plain unsophisticated statement of facts by Bishop Andrew.

I have not heard a brother from the north—I have not heard a brother from the south—(and I have listened to hear)—allege that there were any other facts, that there were any other circumstances having any bearing whatever on the merits of the case now before you. I take it for granted, then, that we have the entire facts of the case before us; and these facts are the cause of whatever alarm, whatever excitement may have spread through our beloved Zion, and over this continent.

Now, sir, I will beg the indulgence of the conference while I read an extract from the address of your general superintendents at your last session. You will indulge me in this.

“The experience of more than half a century, since the organization of our ecclesiastical body, will afford us many important lights and land-marks, pointing out what is the safest and most prudent policy to be pursued in our onward course as regards African slavery in these states, and especially in our own religious community. This very interesting period of our history is distinguished by several characteristic features, having a special claim to our consideration at the present time, particularly in view of the unusual excitement, which now prevails on the subject, not only in the different Christian Churches, but also in the civil body. And, first; our general rule on slavery, which forms a part of the constitution of the Church, has stood from the beginning unchanged, as testamentary of our sentiments on the principle of slavery, and the slave trade. And in this we differ in no respect from the sentiments of our venerable founder, or from those of the wisest and most distinguished statesmen and civilians of our own, and other enlightened and Christian countries. Secondly, in all the enactments of the Church relating to slavery, a due and respectful regard has been had to the laws of the states, never requiring emancipation in contravention of the civil authority, or where the laws of the states would not allow the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom. Thirdly, the simply holding or owning slaves, without regard to circumstances, has at no period of the existence of the Church subjected the master to excommunication. Fourthly, rules have been made from time to time, regulating the sale, and purchase, and holding of slaves, with reference to the different laws of the states where slavery is tolerated; which, upon the experience of the great difficulties of administering them, and the unhappy consequences both to masters and servants, have been as often changed or repealed.

“These important facts, which form prominent parts of our past history as a Church, may very properly lead us to inquire for that course of action in future which may be best calculated to preserve the peace and unity of the whole body, promote the greatest happiness of the slave population, and advance generally, in the slaveholding community of our country, the humane and hallowing influence of our holy religion. We cannot withhold from you, at this eventful period, the solemn conviction of our minds, that no new ecclesiastical legislation on the subject of slavery at this time will have a tendency to accomplish these most desirable objects. And we are fully persuaded that, as a body of Christian ministers, we shall accomplish the greatest good by directing our individual and united efforts, in the spirit of the first teachers of Christianity, to bring both master and servant under the sanctifying influence of the principles of that Gospel which teaches the duties of every relation, and enforces the faithful discharge of them by the strongest conceivable motives. Do we aim at the amelioration of the condition of the slave? How can we so effectually accomplish this, in our calling as ministers of the Gospel of Christ, as by employing our whole influence to bring both him and his master to a saving knowledge of the grace of God, and to a practical observance of those relative duties so clearly prescribed in the writings of the inspired apostles? Permit us to add, that although we enter not into the political contentions of the day, neither interfere with civil legislation nor with the administration of the laws, we cannot but feel a deep interest in whatever affects the peace, prosperity, and happiness of our beloved country. The union of these states, the perpetuity of the bonds of our national confederation, the reciprocal confidence of the different members of the great civil compact;—in a word, the *well being* of the community of which we are members, should never cease to lie near our hearts, and for which we should offer up our sincere and most ardent prayers to the Almighty Ruler of the universe.

“But can we, as ministers of the Gospel, and servants of a Master ‘whose kingdom is not of this world,’ promote these important objects in any way so truly and permanently as by pursuing the course just pointed out? Can we, at this eventful

crisis, render a better service to our country than by laying aside all interference with relations authorized and established by the civil laws, and applying ourselves wholly and faithfully to what specially appertains to our 'high and holy calling;' to teach and enforce the moral obligations of the Gospel, in application to all the duties growing out of the different relations in society? By a diligent devotion to this evangelical employment, with an humble and steadfast reliance upon the aid of divine influence, the number of 'believing masters' and servants may be constantly increased, the kindest sentiments and affections cultivated, domestic burdens lightened, mutual confidence cherished, and the peace and happiness of society be promoted. While, on the other hand, if past history affords us any correct rules of judgment, there is much cause to fear that the influence of our sacred office, if employed in interference with the relation itself, and consequently with the civil institutions of the country, will rather tend to prevent, than to accomplish, these desirable ends."

Sir, I have read this extract that the members of this General Conference who were not present at the last session, and this listening assembly, who may not have heard it before, may understand distinctly the ground on which I, with my colleagues, stand in regard to these questions. I desire that this document may stand recorded, with my name to it, till I sleep in the dust of the earth. (Amen.) I desire to leave it as a legacy to my children and my children's children; and, if I might be permitted to say so, I would leave it as a legacy to the Church when I am no more. I want no man to write my epitaph. I will write it myself. I want no man to write and publish my life. I will do that myself as far as I think it may be necessary for the interests of posterity, or for the benefit of the Church of God. I regret, in reading the life of my venerable colleague, who has gone from earth to heaven since your last session, that this document, as it stood connected with his name, has not appeared in that memoir. I thank the author of "The History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," I mean Dr. Bangs, for having presented this document in that History. I met it in Europe, and I am glad it is there. I never wished my name detached from it; no, never, *never*. When this was written, your superintendents believed that they were acting in perfect accordance with the pastoral address of the General Conference at its session in Cincinnati. We think so now. Well, sir, I have only one further remark to make before I proceed to the chief object for which I address the conference this morning. It is this: I desire that no undue influence may be produced from the peculiar relation in which I stand to the Church. Sympathy may exert too great an influence when it is brought to bear on great principles. The only subject which has awakened my sympathies during this whole discussion is the condition of my suffering brethren of the coloured race, and this never fails to do it. No matter where I meet the man of colour, whether in the south, or in the north with the amount of liberty he enjoys, the sympathies of my nature are all awakened for him. Could I restore bleeding Africa to freedom, to independence, to the rights—to *all* the rights of man, I would most gladly do it. But this I cannot do—you cannot do. And if I cannot burst the bonds of the coloured man, I will not strengthen them. If I cannot extend to him all the good I would, I will never shut him out from the benefits which I have it in my power to bestow. But, sir, I cannot withhold this sentiment from the conference, that with the mental and physical labours of this relation I could never have been sustained—I could never have supported myself—I could never have ministered to the Church unless I had been settled down on some principles equally as changeless as the throne of God, in my estimation—never, never. It is a constant recurrence to these great principles that has sustained me in the discharge of what I conceive to be my duties—duties which grow out of my relation to the Church, and not simply to this conference. These principles have sustained me in the city, and in the desert waste; they have sustained me in the north, and they have sustained me in the south; they have sustained me in the quarters of the black man, and in the huts of the red man. Shake me from these principles, and I am done!—I have done, I say. But what is this? Why, sir, is the Methodist Episcopal Church dependant upon me? Far from it; her interest hangs not upon my shoulders at all. She can do a great deal better without me than I can without her; much better. Well, sir, laying aside this point—endeavouring to disengage myself as far as possible, consider me as expressing my own opinions, without reference to my colleagues. I wish to say, explicitly, that if the superintendents are only to be regarded as the officers of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and consequently as officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church

liable to be deposed as will by a simple majority of this body without a form of trial, no obligation existing growing out of the constitution and laws of the Church, even to assign cause wherefore—I say, if this doctrine be a correct one, everything I have to say hereafter is powerless, and falls to the ground. But brethren will permit me to say, strange as it may seem, although I have had the honour and the privilege to be a member of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever since its present organization, though I was honoured with a seat in the convention of ministers which organized it, in this respect I have heard for the first time, either on the floor of this conference, in an annual conference, or through the whole of the private membership of the Church, this doctrine advanced: this is the first time I ever heard it. Of course it struck me as a novelty. I am not going to enter the arena of controversy with this conference. I desire that my position may be defined. I desire to understand my landmarks as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church—not the bishop of the General Conference, not the bishop of any annual conference. I thought that the constitution of the Church—I thought that its laws and regulations—I thought that the many solemn vows of ordination, the parchment which I hold under the signatures of the departed dead—I thought that these had defined my landmarks—I thought that these had prescribed my duties—I thought that these had marked out my course. In my operations I have acted under the conviction that these were my directions and landmarks, and it affords me great consolation this day to stand, at least in the judgment of this body, to which I hold myself responsible, and before which I will always be ready to appear to answer to any charge they shall prefer against me—I say it affords me some gratification to have stood acquitted for twenty years in the discharge of the high trust committed to my hands; and I here desire to offer my grateful acknowledgments to the Episcopal Committee for the report they have brought to this body, and to the conference for their cordial acceptance of that report. I say I do it with sentiments of sincerity; and it is the more cordial to me in view of what may yet be to come. In this regard, although I have trembled beneath the weight of responsibility, and shrunk before the consciousness of my inability, and especially as I have felt my physical infirmities coming upon me, and knowing that I must be in the neighbourhood of mental infirmity, I stand this day acquitted in my own conscience—(O that I may be acquitted at the bar of my eternal Judge!)—that I have to the best of my ability, with sincerity of heart, and with the ardent desire to promote the great interests of the Church, and the cause of God, in the discharge of the duties which you have intrusted to me—I have never, in the discharge of this trust—God is my witness—I have never given an appointment to any preacher with a desire or design to afflict him. Indeed, if I could do it I should abhor myself. Now, sir, whether this conference is to sustain the position on which I have acted, or not, they are very soon to settle in the vote which is before them; I mean, they are to settle this question, whether it is the right of this body, and whether they have the power to depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church;—whether they have a right to depose my colleague—to depose me without a form of trial; see ye to that. Without specification of wrong, and by almost universal acclamation over this whole house, that Bishop Andrew has been unblamable in his Christian character; without blame in his ministerial vocation; that he has discharged the duties of his sacred office to the Church of God with integrity, with usefulness, and with almost universal acceptability, and in good faith;—with this declaration before the community, before the world, will this conference occupy this position, that they have power, authority to depose Bishop Andrew, without a form of trial, without charge, and without being once called on to answer for himself in the premises; what he did say was voluntary.

Well, brethren, I had conceived—I had understood, from the beginning, that special provision was provided for the trial of a bishop. The constitution has provided that no preacher, no person was to be deprived of the right of trial, according to the forms of Discipline, and of the right of appeal; but, sir, if I understand the doctrine advanced and vindicated, it is that you may depose a bishop without the form of trial; you may depose him without any obligation to show cause, and therefore he is the only minister in your Church who has no appeal. It seems to me that the Church has made special provision for the trial of the bishop, for the special reason that the bishop has no appeal. Well now, sir, I only make these observations, as I said, to the ear of reason. You will remember that this whole thing is going out before the world, as well as the Church. I wish to know my landmarks, to find out where I stand; for indeed I do not hesitate to say to you,

that if my standing, and the relation in which I have been placed to the Methodist Episcopal Church, under my solemn vows of ordination—if my relation is to stand on the voice of a simple majority of this body, without a form of trial, and without an obligation even to show me cause why I am deposed, I have some doubt whether there is the man on this floor that would be willing to stand in my place. Now brethren will at once perceive the peculiar situation in which I am placed. Here are my brethren from the Ohio and other conferences. We have been together in great harmony and peace. There has been great union of spirit everywhere; but I said at the beginning, there were periods in the history of every man occupying any important relation or station in society, when his individual character and influence could not be neutralized by the laws of association. You must unmoor me from my anchorage on the basis of this book; you must unsettle me from my principles—my settled and fixed principles. From these I cannot be shaken by any influences on my right hand or on my left hand; neither the zeal of youth nor the experience of hoary age shall move me from my principles. Convince me that I am wrong, and I yield. And here it may be necessary that I should make an observation in regard to what I have said before: it seems to have been misunderstood. I said, You may immolate me, but you cannot immolate me on a southern altar; you cannot immolate me on a northern altar; I can only be immolated on the altar of the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. What do I mean by this? I mean—call it a compact—call it compromise, constitutional discipline, what you will—I mean on the doctrines and provisions of this book, and I consider this as the bond of union of the M. E. Church. Here then I plant my feet, and here I stand. Let brethren, sir, not misunderstand me, in another point; a point in which they may misunderstand me, in which I have been misunderstood; and you join me on this point. I hold that the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has an indisputable right—constitutional, sacred—to arraign at her tribunal every bishop; to try us there; to find us guilty of any offence with which we are charged on evidence, and to excommunicate—expel us. I am always ready to appear before that body in this regard. I recognize fully their right. But not for myself—not for these men on my right hand, and on my left hand; but for your sakes, and for the Church of God, of which you are members and ministers, let me ask you, let me entreat you, not to rush upon the resolution which is now before you. Posterity, sir, will review your actions—history will record them; and whatever we may do here will be spread out before the face of the world; the eyes of men will be fixed upon it. In this view I was not surprised at all to hear brethren say, “Pause, brethren, I beseech you pause,” and I was not surprised to see men of mind and of thought approach the thing with fear and trembling. But brethren apprehend that there are great difficulties involved in this subject; they apprehend that fearful consequences are to take place, on whichever side of the question they shall move. Pass it, and the south suppose themselves involved in irretrievable ruin. Refuse to pass it, and the north consider the consequences perilous to them. Permit me to say, sir, that I have had some acquaintance, personal acquaintance, both with the north and the south: I think I have been able to cast an impartial eye over these great departments of the Church. I may err in judgment, but I apprehend that the difficulties may not be as insurmountable as brethren have apprehended them to be. I know that some of my brethren of the north are involved in such a manner that I cannot apprehend—I perceive no way in which they can compromise this question. Why? For the obvious reason that it involves a principle. I will compromise with no man when a principle is involved in the compromise. What is that principle? The men that avow it are as honest as any men on this floor. I know them: in the men there is no guile. What is the principle? It was advanced by my worthy brother Cass the other day. Can he compromise the principle? You must convince him of the error of his principle before he will compromise it. What is it? It is that slavery, under all circumstances, is a sin against God.

Mr. Cass interposed,—May I correct the bishop? I believe I did not say so: I said it was a moral evil.

Bishop Soule proceeded,—Well, I am glad to be corrected. That is not brother Cass's principle. A moral evil—a moral evil, and not a sin, under all circumstances. It affords me a great deal of pleasure to hear my worthy brother's statement, for it greatly increases my hope that we shall have a compromise.

Now, sir, notwithstanding brethren have thought, and with perfect sincerity, that they were ready to act on the resolution; although undoubtedly a large ma-

majority of this body have been prepared for it for some time; I cannot but believe that it might be premature in the conference taking action on it even now. I will offer one or two reasons why I think the conference is not prepared for action on the resolution. We have been informed here, from documents—to a great extent petitions and memorials—on the subject of slavery in its various aspects and interests. These documents, these petitions and memorials, have been received with the respect due to the right of petition. They have been committed to a large and judicious committee to examine and report. That committee has not reported to this body: it will report: I need not say to you that it will report. The respect due to some thousand petitioners to this body will lay them under solemn obligations to report; and is it not possible that this report—on the subject immediately connected with the resolution before you—may afford you some light? You will have in the report of that committee several important items of information clearly developed before you. You will know the number of the petitioners, of the memorialists in each of the annual conferences. You will know the relative proportion of these petitioners to the whole number of the Methodist Church within these conferences. You will know the aggregate number of all these memorialists and petitioners, and you will consequently know the relative number in regard to the whole community of the M. E. Church. It will not be disputed, I think, on the floor of this General Conference, that the subjects, so far as they have been presented when the memorials were up, that the subjects on which you are memorialized in these documents, are not local. They are not subjects appertaining specially and exclusively to the memorialists. So far as I heard, every subject was of a general character, in which every member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, east, west, north, and south, have an equal interest and concern. The report of your committee may throw much light on this great subject. But this is not all. I beg to suggest to the brethren that the views of the great body of the Methodist Church, and the great body of her ministers, are not, and cannot be represented here, in regard to the special point before you; and if this be a subject in which all the ministers of the M. E. Church, and all the members of the M. E. Church, have an equal interest and concern, is it safe for this body to proceed to such an important action in regard to the whole interests of the Church, without having a more full development of the subject, both from ministers and Church, than the memorials as yet presented afford? I ask it. Now will the delegation from New-York tell us what are the views of the great body of the Methodists within the New-York Conference on this subject? We have been sitting here, Mr. President, on this case almost from the time we commenced it. It has been, however, before this community. It has been out before the whole Church, and from the views the brethren have taken, I have been almost surprised that we have not had memorials from the city where we sit; I have been almost surprised that we have not had memorials from the people in Philadelphia, from the people in Baltimore, and from the people in Boston. We have had no memorials. There has been no expression on their part, as I have heard; and yet, in the midst of this enlightened body of Methodists, are we prepared thus to say what is the view of the people around us on this question? and, under such circumstances, do you hesitate to stay the question in the resolution before you? I beg the brethren to go a little further on this subject. I will go with my brethren to Ohio. Now I do not know—I am a resident in Ohio, I have some acquaintance in Ohio; both with preachers and with our very excellent and worthy membership in Ohio, my brethren from them, these delegates, have more, and, doubtless, can say more—I should not dare, on the floor of this conference, to say, that the act would meet the approbation of the great body of preachers and members in Ohio: I dare not say it. It is sufficient for me, however, in the present position I occupy, to say, that the Church has not known the subject; and has expressed no opinion on the subject whatsoever. I settle it down, then, as the basis on which I shall proceed, that we have not, and cannot have the views of our ministers and people generally on this subject, so fully expressed to us as to others.

The adoption of that resolution deposes Bishop Andrew without form or trial: such is my deliberate opinion. I do not believe it is safe for our community; I do not believe it is safe for you; and I am out of this question. What shall be done? The question, I know, wakes up the attention of every brother. Can it be possible that the Methodist Episcopal Church is in such a state of excitement—in such a state, I had almost said, of revolution—as to be unprepared to send out the plain, simple facts in the case to the churches, to the annual conferences, everywhere

through our community, and waive all action on this subject till another General Conference?

I said, almost at the commencement of these remarks, sir, that I was not afraid of the *deliberation* of men, of our annual conferences, of the General Conference—, I am afraid of the passions of men, and I could present before you some considerations to illustrate the views that I have given you; and if I give you these views in error of judgment, be assured that they are not views which originate on the spur of the moment: they are the result of sober and deliberate investigation. Can it be possible that the simple circumstance of Bishop Andrew's holding an office as a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church four years longer, with this statement of facts in the case—simple facts in the case—spread out before the enlightened body of this great Methodist community—is there to be an earthquake? I am not prepared to believe it: I soberly am not prepared to believe it. Well, sir, this is the view that I take of the subject. Permit me to make one other suggestion. The providence of God directs the whirlwind and the storm; clouds and darkness indeed may be round about us, but righteousness and justice are the habitation of his throne. Let us be careful that we never suffer a human arm to impede the operations of providence. My beloved colleague, Bishop Andrew, and myself, and all my colleagues, may have passed away from these scenes of trouble and the passions which now agitate the Church of God,—may go to sleep, in God's providence, long before four years go by.

How easy it is for God to direct the elements of society! Don't be surprised, then, brethren, when I say to you, Pause. Brethren may possibly have a little more light: there may be some ray from heaven or earth yet to shine upon this subject. Now it is the solemn conviction of my mind that the safest course you can pursue in the premises is to pass this subject without any implication of Bishop Andrew's character at all, and to send out officially the plain and simple facts in the case to all your societies—to all your conferences. Let it be read everywhere, and then we may have a further expression of opinion, without any kind of agitation. I am about to take my leave of you, brethren. You must know—you cannot but know, that with the principles I have stated to you—with the avowal of my sentiments in regard to this subject—it will not be Bishop Andrew alone that your word will affect! No, sir—I implicate neither my colleagues on my right hand nor on my left; but I say the decision of the question cannot affect Bishop Andrew alone. I wish it to be distinctly understood, it *cannot affect him alone*. I mean specially in this point—I say that the resolution on which we are just about to act goes to sustain the doctrine that the General Conference have power and right to depose one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church without the form of trial—that you are under no obligation from the constitution or laws of the Church to *show cause* even. Now every man must see, and every man must know, that Bishop Andrew cannot be involved alone in the vote. It is the principle which is involved. It goes to say that when this conference shall vote on the subject—a simple majority of this conference, without form of trial, can depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Do you understand it so? If I am mistaken, I shall stand corrected—and I need not say to this conference that such a decision will involve others beside. It involves the office; it involves the charge; it involves the relation itself.

And now, in taking leave, I offer devout prayer to almighty God that you may be directed wisely in the decision you are about to make. I have given to you what in my sober and deliberate judgment is the best and safest course which you can pursue—safest for all concerned. I want that opinion to have no more influence upon you than it justly deserves in the conferences—all the conferences. I thank the conference for the attention they have been pleased to give me. I thank the audience for their attention. I very well know—I am not at all unapprised that the position I occupy—in which I stand on the principles of that resolution—on the principles involved in it—may seal my fate. I say I am not at all unapprised of that. Let me go; but I pray you hold to principles—to principles; and with these remarks I submit the whole to your and to God's direction. (Amen.)

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Dr. Durbin rose, and alluded to the disadvantage of his position in making an after-dinner speech; but, as it could not be avoided, he would make the best of it. If he could secure the attention of the conference, he would try to remove some erroneous impressions which he thought had been made in the course of this de-

bate. The first remark that he had to offer was in regard to a statement of Judge Longstreet, that in the early Church the aggression of Popery had always been resisted by a pure and steadfast minority. What was the application of this remark? Did the brother mean to say that the action of the Methodist Episcopal Church in regard to slavery in any way resembled the growth of Popery? Or did he mean to say, in this age of the world, and in this country, that the interests of society, whether civil or religious, are safer in the hands of the minority than of the majority? Sir, the voice of history does not say so. The institutions of our country do not say so. The brother will not go before the world and say so.

The brother had also stated, very broadly, that the legislation of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery had always done harm! So, then, the objection is not so much against our action in this case as against the uniform action of Methodism on the general subject. Sir, I wish I could go before the world, and to the bar of God, with as clear a conscience and as firm a trust in regard to every other part of our legislation as in regard to our action on slavery. But we are told again and again that we are called here to judge of the laws of sovereign states,—that in the case of Harding—and in every similar case—we must be judges of law,—a business with which we have nothing to do. Nay, more, sir, we are told that in the vote on Harding's case, this body not only acted above the law of the land, but above the law of Methodism—that we voted to sustain, not the Discipline of the Church, but simply the *usage* of the Baltimore Conference. I have heard this repeatedly on this floor, and have seen it repeatedly in print; and I fear that the public mind has really been misled by these statements, so confidently reiterated. But, sir, I deny the whole statement. It is utterly groundless. It is unjust, both with regard to the Baltimore Conference and this General Conference. The sole question we had to judge of in Harding's case was—Whether *it was practicable for him to emancipate his slaves?* We found, sir, that *it was* practicable. It is to-day practicable. On *that* ground, and on that ground only, in full conformity with the provisions of the Discipline, we voted against the motion to reverse the decision of the Baltimore Conference. We could not do otherwise, sir, with the Discipline in our hands. I *did not* vote, nor, I believe, did my brethren in the majority, to sustain the usage of the Baltimore Conference, but to sustain the laws of Methodism.

We of the north have been repeatedly taunted on this floor with our differences of opinion on the subject of slavery. Sir, whatever other differences of opinion there may be among us, on one point there is none. Our minds, and hearts, and feelings, are all united on this one point at least—that *the episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church ought not to be trammelled by slavery.* On that point, sir, our minds are as the mind of one man, and the brethren of the south will find it so. Nor is this any sudden purpose. It is the ground we have always held, and we shall be found standing up for it, shoulder to shoulder, to the end of the battle. We have also been told, sir, that the early Methodists, in their protest against slavery, went further than Christ and his apostles had done. Nay, sir, we have had arguments to-day drawn from the Bible to sustain slavery. What do brethren mean, sir? Is it their *intention* to plead the word of God in defence of slavery? Do they really believe, with the brother from South Carolina, who spoke this morning, that the system of slavery is to find its authority in the Decalogue, written by God's own hand? Sir, they cannot mean this, they will not affirm this. And yet we were gravely told that because the commandment speaks of the ox, and the ass, and the man-servant, and maid-servant, in the same connection, that therefore the right of property was assumed on the same ground for the latter as for the former. As well go a little further, and assume that the *wife* too was a chattel, according to the intent of the commandment. O! sir, I hope we shall never be compelled to hear the Bible—the record of God's truth—the charter of human freedom and human rights—appealed to in support of American slavery.

We have had some strange statements here in regard to the legislation of the Church on the subject of slavery. Brethren have tried to make the impression, to use one of their own figures, that the north has been putting the screws on the south, and continually pressing them harder, until at last the compression can be endured no longer. Sir, the facts in the case are just the reverse of all this. The history of the Church shows this point indisputably, that the highest ground that has ever been held upon the subject, was taken at the very organization of the Church, and that concessions have been made by the Church continually, from that time to this, in view of the *necessities* of the south; that while the anti-

slavery principle has never been abandoned, our rules have been made less and less stringent, and our language less and less severe,—because experience has shown it to be *absolutely necessary* for the welfare of the Church in the south,—and these concessions have been made, too, while the power of the Church has been continually passing from the slaveholding to the non-slaveholding states. I trust brethren will bear this in mind. Without laying stress upon Mr. Wesley's vehement denunciations of slavery, what was the declaration of the Church in 1780? "*We pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom.*" The language of 1784, when the Church was organized, was equally bold. All *private members* were required to emancipate their slaves in those states where the laws allowed of manumission. The action taken was too strong, sir, and in six months it was suspended, in accordance with the genius of Methodism, which does not all the good she would, but all she can. The Church then made a concession to the south on the score of *necessity*. Even the language of the question on slavery was mitigated. In 1796 it was, "What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African slavery?" In 1804 it was, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?" In 1808 all that relates to slaveholding among private members was stricken out, and no rule on the subject has existed since. I might advert to other points to show the truth of my position, that the Church has gradually made concessions to the necessities of the slaveholding states, until our brethren from the south say they stand firmly on the ground of Discipline. But I forbear: it will not be denied by any who are conversant with the history of the Church. Is it necessary to make still another concession, and allow slavery to connect itself with our episcopacy?

Now, sir, I do not mean to say that these concessions ought not to have been made. Our fathers wisely made them, on the ground of necessity. The Methodist Church could not have existed at all in the south without them. This should be a rebuke to our abolition brethren everywhere who would urge this question to extremities. I take my stand on the *conservative* ground of the Discipline, as far from extreme opinions in the north as in the south. I have no sympathy with either. I would not, dare not, urge on our southern brethren to a position where they cannot stand. The Discipline has placed the Church in the proper relation to slavery in the south. She does not propose to disturb the relations of our southern brethren on the question of slavery in the south, but to leave them free to contend with the evil in the best manner they can under the laws of their several states. But while I stand up firmly for their rights and privileges, and shall be ever ready to lend what weight I can to protect them if assaulted, I must beg our brethren of the south not to return the question of slavery upon the north in connection with our general superintendency. This is the real question, Shall slavery be connected with our episcopacy, which is common to all parts of our Church, the north as well as the south, and thus cause the Church to give her example in favour of the "great evil of slavery," in a form which will be pleaded as decisive of her judgment on the general question, and in those parts of the country where no necessity exists for such a declaration, and where it will fearfully agitate our societies? There is no necessity in the south for any one of our bishops to hold slaves in order to do his work there. This is admitted on all hands; while it is as readily admitted, even by the south, that there are many conferences "in which his connection with slavery would render his services *unacceptable*."

I come now, sir, with as much delicacy as possible, to examine the question of the power of the General Conference over the bishops. It has been maintained here, sir, that the General Conference has no power to remove a bishop, or to suspend the exercise of his functions, unless by impeachment and trial, in regular form, for some offence regularly charged. If this be true, sir, I have greatly misunderstood the nature of our episcopacy. From whence is its power derived? Do we place it upon the ground of divine right? Surely not, sir. You do not plead any such doctrine. Whence, then, is it derived? Solely, sir, from the suffrages of the General Conference. There, and there only, is the source of episcopal power in our Church. And the same power that conferred the authority can remove it, if they see it necessary. Nor is this a new doctrine, sir. The Minutes of 1785 declare that at the organization of the Church, the "episcopal office was made elective, and the elected superintendent or bishop amenable to the body of ministers and preachers." The Notes to the Discipline assert that the bishops are "*perfectly subject* to the General Conference—their power, their usefulness, themselves, are entirely at the mercy" of that body. Again, sir, I bring you the autho-

urity of a witness sanctioned by the conference of 1792, and by Bishop Asbury, and whose doctrine on this subject is endorsed by our late beloved Bishop Emory. I do not mention these venerated names for the mere purpose of awaking the feelings of brethren.

I would not call the sleeping dead from their honoured graves, as some have done on this floor. No, sir; they are escaped from all our strifes and warfare. Let them rest, sir—let them rest. They never saw the Methodist Church threatened with so fearful a storm as that which now hangs over us; I know not what they would say or do were they with us now. But hear my witness. Rev. John Dickens, the most intimate friend of Bishop Asbury, in a pamphlet, published in 1792, as already stated, with the sanction of the General Conference, thus answered a question put by Mr. Hammett, in reference to this very point. "Now whoever said the superiority of the bishops was by virtue of a separate ordination? If this gave them their superiority, how came they to be removable by the conference?" "We all know Mr. Asbury derived his official power from the conference, and, therefore, his office is at their disposal." "Mr. Asbury was thus chosen by the conference, both before and after he was ordained a bishop; and he is still considered as the person of their choice, by being responsible to the conference, who have power to remove him, and to fill his place with another, if they see it necessary. And as he is liable every year to be removed, he may be considered as their annual choice." Bishop Emory states that this may be considered as expressing the views of "Bishop Asbury in relation to the true and original character of Methodist episcopacy;" and gives it the sanction of his own authority, by quoting and using it in the twelfth section of the "Defence of our Fathers."

I have thus, sir, expressed, and, I trust, maintained, my views of the authority of the General Conference, in regard to the episcopal office. I am sorry, sir, that this opinion differs somewhat from your own, (if I may be permitted to address you personally,) knowing, as I do, that my judgment, thrown into the opposite scale to yours, is but as a feather against a thousand pounds weight. Still, sir, I must hold my opinion.

A few words now in regard to the application of this power in the present instance. The action that is proposed to be taken in the case of Bishop Andrew is contained in the substitute now before us. We are told that it is in fact a proposition to *depose* Bishop Andrew. Sir, we do not so regard it. The venerable man who moved it does not so regard it. I am sure he does not: I know him well—he has called me "John," sir, from my boyhood,—and on the day when he offered this substitute, he called to me across the pews—"John, explain this for me." Understanding his views of the substitute, I now propose to explain it—having the opportunity of doing so for the first time. It reads:

"Whereas, The Discipline of our Church forbids the doing of anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and, whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference, that he desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains."

Now, sir, this action is *not* contemplated without cause. The preamble states the ground of the action clearly and distinctly, in a statement of undisputed and indisputable facts. And what does the resolution propose? Expulsion? No, sir. Deposition? No. If I am pressed to a decision of this case in its present form, I shall vote for that substitute, and so will many others; but if, after we *have* voted for it, any man should come and tell us personally that we have voted to *depose* Bishop Andrew, we should consider it a personal—shall I say—insult, sir? The substitute proposes only to express the sense of this conference in regard to a matter which it cannot, in duty and conscience, pass by without suitable expression; and having made the solemn expression, it leaves Bishop Andrew to act as *his* sense of duty shall dictate. Will any of the brethren on the other side of the house tell us that if such is our deliberate sense, and we deem it our duty to the Church to say so, we ought to suppress it? One brother answers, "Yes." I will not take that brother's answer for the answer of the south. There is too much magnanimity among the brethren of that region of chivalry to allow of such an answer from them. In passing this substitute—if we do pass it—we make a clear declaration against the connection of slavery with our episcopacy—a declaration

which we cannot avoid making if we would, and ought not if we could :—a declaration, sir, which the world will approve. I will take the excellent advice which you gave us this morning, sir, and not appeal to the passions of this conference—nor to the audience in the gallery—but if an appeal must be made, sir, to any tribunal out of this body, we are willing to abide by the verdict of the world, sir, and by the decision of a far higher tribunal. There, sir, we shall fear no reversal of our action in this case. O! sir, when we were left to infer this morning, from the remarks of the chair, that the passage of this substitute would affect, not only Bishop Andrew, but perhaps others of our bishops, I could not but feel that a momentary cloud gathered before my eyes, to dim the clearness of my vision. The feelings which that remark excited were not calculated to give greater freedom to the action of my reason, or greater precision to my judgment. But strong as were and are those feelings, they cannot stifle my conscience or darken my understanding.

I have read in the public reports of the proceedings during my absence some things that gave me great pain. Mention has been made here of proceedings at law—of the possibility of obtaining an “injunction” upon the Book Concern, and stopping our presses. I am sorry that such words have been uttered here. Perhaps such an injunction might be issued. I do not know but a judge or a chancellor might be found (though I do not believe it) wicked enough to rejoice in our difficulties, and exult over our strife. Ah! sir, wicked men would, indeed, exult in it: Satan would exult in it—perhaps, I say, such an injunction might be obtained, but what then? You may lay an injunction upon types, and presses, and newspapers; but, thank God, no injunction can be laid upon an honest conscience and an upright mind. The Book Concern! There is no man here, I am sure, whose soul is so mean and paltry as to be influenced by such a motive. Sir, that Book Concern was burned down *once*, and I grieved over its destruction; but gladly would I see it destroyed again this night—gladly would I welcome the first flash of light that might burst into that window—even though in the conflagration buildings, types, presses, paper, plates, and all, were this night to be destroyed, if it could place the Church back where she was only six months ago.

Before I sit down, I desire to call the attention of the conference to a proposition made by the brethren from the south in the Committee of Pacification. The language of part of that proposition was “that Bishop Andrew shall not be required to preside in any annual conference in which his connection with slavery would render his services unacceptable.” Now, sir, here was a clear admission of the fact that Bishop Andrew’s position did render him unacceptable to many of the conferences, and a proposition founded upon it. Keeping the admission in mind, and recollecting that we are forbidden by the constitution to do anything that shall impair our itinerant general superintendency, I beg the conference to look at the bearing of this proposition, and of similar ones that have been made here from time to time. It is wrong to do that for one of the bishops which, if done for all, would be destruction to the system. Now, sir, suppose that you should become an abolitionist, and on that account you could not go to the south—for the same reasons precisely a resolution might be brought here to confine your services to the east. Suppose some similar contingency to continue another bishop in the north, and another in the west—is not our itinerant general superintendency effectually destroyed? Assuredly it is—and it seems to me that we cannot take the first step toward such a result without violating the constitution as it now stands.

I am free to declare that I do not wish to come to a direct vote on this momentous question; I have looked long and earnestly for some way to escape. I have hoped our brethren of the south could agree to say to this conference, “Brethren, we have been very unexpectedly and unintentionally the occasion, in the person of our beloved bishop, of bringing the Church into great danger; we had not apprehended such a cloud as now covers our Zion; we have stood up for what we believed to be our rights and the interests of the Church in the south; we have heard you feelingly and plainly declare the certain danger which threatens you in the north; the sacrifice of the peace and unity of the Church is too costly a sacrifice to be made almost by accident; postpone all proceedings in this unfortunate case, and we will see that the Church shall suffer no further harm.” Such an announcement as this would come upon the conference and the Church like a message from heaven; and no man would ask you, how, when, or where are you going to deal with the case. This conference and the Church would trust your word and your religion in the case, and ask you no questions. I will conclude, sir, by say-

ing, a few days ago brother Early, from Virginia, threw out a suggestion at the close of the session, viz.: *might* not this matter be referred back to the Church or the conferences? This course was distinctly advised by yourself, sir, this morning, in your address to the conference. These weighty facts led me to believe that the north would meet the south on the following resolution, which I would willingly offer if I had the least intimation that our brethren from the south would meet us on it, viz.:—

“Resolved, That the case of Bishop Andrew be referred to the Church, and that the judgment of the next General Conference be deemed and taken to be the voice of the Church, whether Bishop Andrew shall continue to exercise his functions as a general superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church, while he sustains the relation to slavery as stated in his communication to the conference, as reported to the conference by the Committee on the Episcopacy.”

After Dr. Durbin had concluded, Dr. Smith, Mr. Longstreet, and Dr. Capers made some explanations, and the conference adjourned.

THURSDAY, MAY 30.

Dr. Capers rose and said,—*Mr. President*: At no previous General Conference have the conflicting opinions of the north and south in relation to slavery and abolition been so fully and strongly set before us and the community, as at present. I wish it may prove for the better; though I can hardly hope it will not for the worse. In what I have now on my mind to utter, I wish to call attention first, to the unity of the Church, as it seems to me it ought to affect this question, independently of all sectional views in any quarter.

Perhaps it has always been felt since the Church has been extended over the whole country, north and south, that brethren who have occupied positions far north and south, have been opposed to each other in their views of this subject. Possibly they have been too far apart, in local position, to understand well each other's principles; and the action has been as if a medical man should bestow all his care on a particular limb, to cure a disease of the general system. Now, sir, if I know my heart, I approach this subject with an ardent and sincere desire to contribute something—if ever so little—to the conservation of the whole Church. However wide a difference there may be,—and I apprehend there is indeed a wide difference,—between my views of slavery as it exists among the Methodists in South Carolina, and the views of brethren of the north and east, I thank God to know and to feel, that this difference of our views has never awakened in me, for one moment, a disposition to inflict the slightest injury on any brother. If I have ever said aught against any one's good name, as a Christian or Christian minister, on account of this difference of opinion, or have cherished in my heart any other than Christian feelings toward any one for a cause which I deem so foreign from the true ground of faith and fellowship, I am not conscious of it. I have considered, sir, that our Church is one, and our ministry one, in spite of these opinions.

My honoured brother (Dr. Durbin) deprecates involving the north in a connection with slavery; and assumes that such must be the result, if Bishop Andrew is continued in the general superintendency. But I hold, that if the north might be involved in the evil they so much deprecate, for the cause alleged, they are already involved by another cause. They are involved by the unity of the Church and the unity of our ministry. I thank God for this unity; a unity which stands not in the episcopacy only, but pervades the entire of our ecclesiastical constitution. We have not one episcopacy only, but one ministry, one doctrine, one Discipline,—every usage and every principle one for the north and the south. And in this view of the matter, I cannot but express my surprise that it should be said,—(and it has been said by more than one brother on this floor,)—that if the present measure should not pass, it will extend the evil of slavery over the north. It has been declared —(and I thank brethren for the declaration)—that it is not the purpose of any to oppress the south; but they insist much and gravely on their duty to protect the north. It is easy to err in the application of abstract principles to practice; and I must confess, that in the present instance, the application appears to my mind to be not only erroneous, but preposterous. What, sir, extend the evil of slavery over the north by a failure to carry the resolution on your table! What is slavery? What new slave would such a failure make? What slave, now a slave, would it make more a bond-man? Or who that is not now a slaveholder might be made a slaveholder? Not one more slave, nor one more slaveholder can be made by the failure of the measure; and yet brethren are bound to carry it, not that they may

oppress the south, but merely that they may prevent an extension of slavery over the north. It is, they say, a mere matter of self-preservation. As if for the cause that Bishop Andrew was made a slaveholder without his consent, by the will of the old lady who died in Augusta some years ago, all these brethren, and all they represent, were about to be involved, or were already involved, in the same predicament with the bishop, whether they will or no. The phrase "*connected with slavery*," has been complained of as extremely indefinite; but I could not have thought that it was so indefinite as this hypothesis proceeds to make it. Bishop Andrew's "connection with slavery," brethren assure us, will carry the defilement to hundreds of thousands who are now clean, unless they prevent it by the passage of that resolution! I cannot trace this line of connection; I cannot fix its figure; I cannot conceive of it as an actual verity. Mesmerism itself should not be more impalpable. But I am free to declare, sir, that I have no desire for the extension of slavery. I could wish no freeman to be made a slave. I could rather wish that slaves were freemen. I certainly could not wish my brethren who are served by freemen, to be taxed with such incumbrances as some of us are, who have slaves to serve us.

Sir, I consider our circumstances in this debate quite too serious for extreme speculations on either side; but if brethren will indulge that way, they will allow me the benefit of inferences fairly deducible from their own mode of reasoning. And I claim the inferences as fair from their argument on this point, that if they are involved, or likely to be involved, in the evil of slavery by their relation to Bishop Andrew, they are already involved,—inextricably involved, unless they break up the Church,—by the fact that they are akin to me. Yes, sir, they and I are brethren, whether they will or no. The same holy hands have been laid upon their heads and upon my head. The same vows which they have taken, I have taken. At the same altar where they minister, do I minister; and with the same words mutually on our tongues. We are the same ministry, of the same Church. Not *like*, but *identical*. Are they elders? So am I. Spell the word. There is not a letter in it which they dare deny me. Take their measure. I am just as high as they are, and they as low as I am. We are not one ministry for the north, and another ministry for the south; but one, and one only, for the whole Church. And I cannot pass from this point without thanking brother Green for his remarks, so fitly made with respect to this matter; the force of which, I am persuaded, cannot possibly be thrown off from this great question. Is the episcopacy for the whole Church? So is the ministry. And if the fact that a bishop is connected with slavery in the south, requires him to be suspended, because he cannot, while so connected, exercise his functions acceptably at the north, the same must be concluded of the ministry; which, as one for the whole Church, and having equal constitutional competency for the north or the south indifferently, must, in the same involvement as the bishop, become subject to like disability. Nor does the interference stop here, but it extends to the privileges of the membership of the Church, as well as the ministry. The wound inflicted by this thrust at the bishop goes through the entire Church. We are everywhere one Church,—one communion. And may you refuse the sacrament of the Lord's supper, or admission to a love-feast, to a member of the Church in Charleston, whose business may carry him to Boston, because in Boston you will have no connection with slavery? Admit, then, the principle assumed on the other side, and to what confusion will it not lead you? First, the bishop must surcease his functions. He may not be allowed to exercise them even in the slaveholding states! Next, the ministry in the south must be declared incompetent to go north. Next, they may not be allowed to minister *at all*, for fear of contaminating the immaculate north by their ministry as Methodists among the defilements of the south. And next, (and by the easiest gradation,) our people may be told that communicants at the south may not be communicants at the north, and cannot be received as such. It has been said that the course of aggression from the beginning has been from the south toward the north, and not from the north toward the south.

(Dr. Durbin interposed: "Dr. Capers misapprehends me. I said the course of concession,—not aggression,—had been from the north to the south, and not from the south to the north.")

Dr. C. I understood the idea to be, that in the conflict on the subject of slavery, the north has been giving up to the south, and the south encroaching on the north.

(Dr. D. "My words were, that the history of the legislation was a constant concession from the north to the south. That was all I said, and all I wished to say.")

Dr. C. I am glad to take the expression in the mildest form. And in what I

have to answer, I must beg indulgence with respect to dates. I will thank any brother to supply the date for any fact that I may mention.

This being a question, then, of north and south, we must first settle what the terms mean. What is north and what is south in this controversy? I now understand my brother to have said that the course of concession has been from the north to the south; and I think he also said, that these concessions have been made while the power in the Church was passing from the slaveholding to the non-slaveholding states. He carried his dates back to the beginning, and gave us north and south as far back as 1784. But what region was north, and what south, at that time? Our brother says the majority was south; and where was the south in which that majority dwelt? Was it in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, or South Carolina? Where was the south of which the brother speaks, at the date he gives? A few years later, we find two or three missionaries sent into South Carolina and Georgia, but the very name of Methodism had not reached there in 1784. Our first missionary was sent into Mississippi from South Carolina in 1802, and into Alabama in 1808. But we had Maryland and Virginia for the south. Maryland and Virginia! What, the very centre of the system south? And if Maryland and Virginia were the south, where was the north? Was New-York the north? What, a slave state north? As for New-England, the bright morning of her birth had not yet dawned. There were no Methodists there. Is it not plain then, that our brother found the power of the majority of the Church to have been in the south before there was any south? and the north to have conceded to the south before there was either north or south? What concessions had one slaveholding state to make to another slaveholding state? Did ever Virginia ask concessions of Carolina, or Carolina of Virginia? It is contrary to the nature of the case that they should. And until New-York became a free state, what concessions had she to make to Maryland or Virginia? No, sir, this question of north and south belonged not to those days; and the "legislation" (as my brother calls it) of those times, and times still later, (whether wise or unwise,) is to accounted for on very different grounds from what he has supposed. In those times, slavery existed by general consent, and even the atrocious slave-trade was carried on both by men of old England and New-England. There was no jealousy in the state legislatures of any interference of a hurtful or insurrectionary tendency; and it was not deemed necessary to enact laws to limit the right or privilege of the master to manumit his slaves at will. In these circumstances our rules about slavery were commenced. Rules, of the character or tendency of which it is not my purpose to speak; but which, whether good or bad, lax or severe, were not begun, or, for many years, continued in a struggle between south and north, slave states and free, but out of a common benevolence, in states similarly circumstanced, and without contravention of the laws. I cannot give date for the rise of our question of north and south, but I will say again, that it must date later than the time when the northern slaveholding states were gradually and profitably disposing of their slaves; and the southern slaveholding states, not yet apprehensive of the antagonist interests that were to arise between northern free states and southern slave states, were comparatively indifferent about the course of things. The action of the Church was not a southern or a northern action, but such as was deemed admissible in the state of the laws where the Church existed.

It has been urged that Mr Wesley was an abolitionist.

(Dr. Durbin: "I take the liberty to say that I never said that of Mr. Wesley.")

Dr. Capers. I presume you would not; and I do not think any one could, on mature reflection. Mr. Wesley wrote strong things against slavery. But he wrote equally strong things against republicanism and the revolution. And yet, when these United States had achieved their independence, who acted more kindly, or taught more loyal lessons toward our government than Mr. Wesley. And I must say here, that I am in possession of a piece of information about his anti-slavery principles, which perhaps other brethren do not possess. The gentleman mentioned yesterday by Dr. Durbin, (I mean Mr. Hammett,) was, for some time, my schoolmaster. My father was one of his first and firmest friends and patrons, and a leading member of his society, first in Charleston and afterward in Georgetown, where, for a while, I was his pupil. Owing to this, I suppose, at the death of his only son, not many years ago, I was given his correspondence with Mr. Wesley, during his residence as a Wesleyan missionary in the West Indies, and afterward in Charleston, till Mr. Wesley's death. The hand-writing of Mr. Wesley is unquestionable, and I state on the authority of this correspondence, that Mr. Wesley gave Mr. Hammett his decided countenance and blessing while he

was in Charleston, no less than when he was at St. Kitts. Here in South Carolina, then, Mr. Hammett formed a religious society in the south proper, and in the south exclusively, with Mr. Wesley's sanction, and for the avowed purpose of being more Wesleyan than what was called Mr. Asbury's Connection was thought to be; and what rule did he adopt on slavery? Why no rule at all. My information is completely satisfactory to my own mind, on this point; and I say, on the authority of that correspondence, and the testimony of my honoured father, who lived till after I was myself a minister, that when Mr. Hammett, with Mr. Wesley's sanction, raised societies in South Carolina, neither did Mr. Hammett enjoin on those societies any rule respecting slavery, neither did Mr. Wesley direct or advise any such rule. And why not? Can any one be at a loss to account for it? The reason plainly was the same which prevented Mr. Wesley, and after him the Wesleyan English Conference, from ever enjoining any rule respecting slavery for the missions in the West Indies, except that the missionaries should wholly refrain from intermeddling with the subject. The reason is found in the loyalty of Methodism and religion; a principle which no man knew better how to appreciate than Mr. Wesley. He knew not how to make rules against the law of the land; and no example can be adduced in the history of British Methodism of disciplinary rules, on the subject of slavery, for any country, in advance of the civil law. This is the ground on which the south now stands; and will the north take opposite ground? If they do, they may neither plead the authority of Mr. Wesley, the British Connection, or Mr. Asbury for it. For myself, I must utterly abjure all right or pretension on the part of the Church to interfere with the state. Neither can I put myself, neither can I suffer myself to be put, in contact with the law of the land.

I was glad to hear my brother say for the north, that they have no intention to contravene the laws in our southern states. I thank him for saying so, and I adjure them not to attempt to do that thing. I was glad to hear him say, also, that in the case of the appeal of Harding, there was not a brother who voted to sustain the action of the Baltimore Conference, who did not do so under a full persuasion that he could have emancipated the slaves lawfully if he would. (Though I confess I cannot but fear that popular opinion was too much honoured in that matter.) But this question of north and south, as it presents itself in the case before us, appears to me to involve the Church in a peculiar way. In a case like that of Harding, he and his triers, for all I know, may have belonged to the state of Maryland, whose laws were concerned, and may all have been reached by the officers of the law if they were deemed to be offenders. But in the case of Bishop Andrew, a citizen of the state of Georgia, whose laws are displeasing, say, to the people of New-Hampshire or the north, is arrested by a General Conference composed (for two-thirds of it) of northern men, on an allegation that he, the citizen of Georgia, conforms himself to the laws and institutions of Georgia against the prejudices of the northern people; and for this it is proposed to suspend him. It is as though you had reached forth a long arm from New-Hampshire to Georgia, to bring a citizen of the latter state to be punished by the prejudices of the former, for his loyalty to the state to which he belongs. Such a proceeding cannot be right; and yet (I repeat) it appears to me that the present is very like such a proceeding. If our ecclesiastical jurisdiction extends to citizens of all the states, it must respect the laws of all alike, and oppose itself to none. What should it avail, to admit the obligation of inferior officers and judicatures of the Church,—such as deacons and elders, and quarterly and annual conferences,—to respect the laws of their several states, while your highest officers and supreme judicature,—your bishops and General Conference,—should be withheld from their control, or even be allowed to censure and oppose them according to your prejudices. Patriotism and religion both require that we should bow to the supremacy of the laws; and to the supremacy of the laws of all the states alike. Those of the north, acting in this General Conference for the whole Church, in all the states, have no more right to run counter to the constitution and laws of the state of Georgia, than we of the south should have to oppose the laws of any of the northern states. And can it have come to such a pass with us, that one is of the south because he respects the laws and constitutions of southern states, and another is of the north because he respects them not? South or north, the authority of the laws is the same, and the obligations of the Christian citizen to observe the laws must be acknowledged the same.

It has been urged that a bishop is only an officer of the General Conference; and that his election, and not his consecration, gives him his authority as bishop.

And to prove this position, my respected brother (Dr. Durbin) referred for testimony to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and Mr. Dickens. But I could not but think there was one small particular wanting in the testimony, the lack of which spoiled it altogether for the use intended. The references of my brother were full enough, and to the point, if he had only meant to prove that a bishop is amenable to the General Conference, and that the General Conference has full power to put him out of office. But to reduce a bishop to a mere General Conference officer, it was necessary to prove that that body had a right to displace him at will, with or without some crime alleged. And for this, his authorities were lacking. No authority of Mr. Asbury, Dr. Coke, Mr. Dickens, or anybody else—before this case of Bishop Andrew caused it to be asserted on this floor—can be adduced for any such doctrine. If a bishop is no more than an officer of the General Conference, wherefore is he consecrated? Shall we be told also that elders and deacons are only officers of the annual conferences? What would be thought of a bishop by election, who, without consecration, should assume the functions of the episcopacy as if he had been ordained? Who could consent to such a usurpation? A bishop an officer of the General Conference only! And is it in such a capacity that he ordains and stations the preachers at the annual conferences? An officer of the General Conference only! Then were it both untrue and blasphemous to invest him with the office, with those holy words of the consecration service, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a bishop in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But we are assured that a bishop must be considered as no more than an officer of the General Conference, or else we shall incur the imputation of Puseyism. And in a desperate effort to fulfil our purposes on Bishop Andrew, shall we strip the Church of everything sacred, and reduce it to the level of a mere human association? Is there no position for the Church above that of a Free Mason's lodge, unless we hoist it on the stilts of the High-Church conceit, to the pitch of Puseyism?

Much has been said, in this debate, about the constitution, as authorizing the measure which brethren propose to take with respect to Bishop Andrew; and I must beg to call attention to what appears to me the true ground with respect to that question. I am opposed to this measure in every aspect of it; and for many reasons; but its unconstitutionality forms, to my mind, its chief objection.

But what is the constitution? and how should we interpret it?

It is either the supreme disciplinary law of the whole Church; or it is that law of the Church by which the governing power is limited. In the first sense, it is the imbediment of those principles which are deemed fundamental to the great object for which the Church, as a Christian community, was constituted. And in the second sense, it is that application of these principles to the governing power (the General Conference in the present instance) which confines its action within the limits necessary to promote, and not hinder, the attainment of that same great object. And the interpretation of the constitution, in either respect, should always be such as conforms to the grand object of the Church's organization. This object is declared to be "*the spreading of Scriptural holiness over these lands*;" and whatever militates against this object must, therefore, be contrary to the constitution. As it respects the Church at large, the constitution is contained in the Articles of Religion, and the General Rules: as it applies to the General Conference, the Restrictive Rules are technically the constitution. Now whatever else may be said about this constitution, it will not be denied that,

It must be Christian: agreeing with the principles of the Old and New Testament.

It must be Protestant: maintaining the Holy Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice.

And it must be consistent with the great object for which we have all along steadfastly held it to be our belief that God has raised us up. It must consist with our calling of God, "to spread Scripture holiness over these lands."

But in all these respects, I must call in question the constitutionality of the measure before us. Bishop Andrew is to be required to emancipate certain negroes; and to remove them from Georgia to some free state that he may be enabled to do so. This is not affirmed in so many words in the resolution on your table, but it is the deed which that resolution seeks to effect; the only contingency known in the resolution being the emancipation of the negroes, which can be effected in no other way but by their removal. No question is asked, or care taken, as to the age and

infirmities of any of these negroes, whom he is thus to take into a strange land and climate for emancipation; nor what may be the wants of childhood among them; nor what ties of kindred are to be sundered; but the deed must be done, and he must make haste to do it, for nothing else can restore him to his functions as a bishop. Now this is unconstitutional, for it is unchristian. Whatever odium may attach to slavery, many a slave would curse you for freedom thus procured; and Bishop Andrew as a Christian man, not to say a Christian bishop, might not dare to sin against the law of love, in the way you would require.

And it is unconstitutional, because it is not Protestant. Our fifth article says, "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." And the twenty-third article says, "The president, the congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the constitution of the United States, AND BY THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE STATES." Now, there is no injunction of the Holy Scriptures more positive than that which respects submission to the civil power; this power is recognized in our twenty-third article as existing in the general assemblies, &c., according to the constitutions of the respective states; and yet the resolution before us sets aside the injunction of the Scriptures, and the authority of the constitution and laws of Georgia, and makes your ipse dixit, uttered by the force of northern prejudices, the supreme rule for the bishop's conduct;—a rule which he must observe with or without his conscience, and for or against humanity and religion, or be laid aside from the holy duties of his sacred office, because you arbitrarily demand it from your chair of ecclesiastical supremacy. I say this is not Protestant; and that it is unconstitutional because it is contrary to Protestantism.

And it is unconstitutional, yet again, because it is inconsistent with the great object for which the Church has been constituted, as it must impede and hinder the course of our ministry in many of the states, and debar our access altogether to large portions of the coloured population.

I beseech brethren to allow due weight to the considerations which have been so kindly and ably urged by others on this branch of the subject. I contemplate it, I confess, with a bleeding heart. Never, never have I suffered as in view of the evil which this measure threatens against the south. The agitation has already begun there; and I tell you that though our hearts were to be torn out of our bodies, it could avail nothing, when once you have awakened the feeling that we cannot be trusted among the slaves. Once you have done this thing, you have effectually destroyed us. I could wish to die sooner than live to see such a day. As sure as you live, brethren, there are tens of thousands, nay hundreds of thousands, whose destiny may be perilled by your decision on this case. When we tell you that we preach to a hundred thousand slaves in our missionary field, we only announce the beginning of our work,—the beginning openings of the door of access to the most numerous masses of slaves in the south. When we add, that there are two hundred thousand now within our reach who have no Gospel unless we give it to them, it is still but the same announcement of the beginnings of the opening of that wide and effectual door, which was so long closed, and so lately has begun to be opened, for the preaching of the Gospel, by our ministry, to a numerous and destitute portion of the people. O, close not this door! Shut us not out from this great work, to which we have been so signally called of God. Consider our position. I pray you, I beseech you by every sacred consideration, pause in this matter. Do not talk about concessions to the south. We ask for no concessions,—no compromises. Do with us as you please, but spare the souls for whom Jesus died. If you deem our toils too light, and that after all, there is more of rhetoric than cross-bearing in our labours, come down and take a part with us. Let this be the compromise, if we have any. I could almost promise my vote to make the elder a bishop who should give such a proof as this of his devotion to,—I will not say the emancipation of the negro race, but what is better,—what is more constitutional and more Christian,—the salvation of the souls of the negroes on our great southern plantations. Concessions! We ask for none. So far from it, we are ready to make any in our power to you. We come to you not for ourselves, but for perishing souls; and we entreat you, for Christ's sake, not to take away from them the bread of life which we are just now beginning to carry them. We beg for this—I must repeat it—with bleeding hearts. Yes, I feel intensely on this subject. The stone of stumbling and rock

of offence, of former times, when George Daugherty, a southern man, and a southern minister, and one of the wisest and best that ever graced our ministry, was dragged to the pump in Charleston, and his life rescued by a sword in a woman's hand,—the offence of the anti-slavery measures of that day has but lately begun to subside. I cannot, I say, forget past times, and the evil of them, when in those parts of my own state of South Carolina, where slaves are most numerous, there was little more charity for Methodist preachers than if they had been Mormons, and their access to the negroes was looked upon as dangerous to the public peace. Bring not back upon us the evil of those bitter days. I cannot forget how I felt when, thirty-three years ago, Riddlespurger, who kept a shop and sold rum and calico on the Dorchester road some twelve miles from Charleston, asked us to preach at his house, and told us of hundreds of negroes in the neighbourhood, who had never heard preaching, who would come to hear. And though he was a rum-seller, and I suspected his object,—and hateful as it seemed, to be associated with one whose business was a nuisance to the neighbourhood,—the man of rum,—to Riddlespurger's I went, and preached to the negroes at the risk of the duck-pond, where it was threatened to bate my zeal, till, finding that the preaching sold no more grog, or possibly being scared, the poor man begged us to desist from coming to preach;—when my venerable colleague on this floor, (Mr. Dunwody,) left the city in the afternoon to go a distance in another direction, to meet an assembly of negroes late at night, by the light of the moon, on the side of a swamp, to preach and administer the sacraments in the wild woods, as if it had been a thing the daylight might not look upon, or Christian people countenance at their dwellings. Yes, sir, and I think he was at it all night there in the woods, in the season and region of pestilence, and baptized and administered the holy eucharist to some three hundred persons.

Am I not correct? (Turning to Mr. Dunwody,) Did you not baptize three hundred?

(Mr. Dunwody: "I don't remember how many, but there were a great many.")

I said, sir, that we ask for no concessions. We ask nothing for ourselves. We fear nothing for ourselves. But we ask, and we demand, that you embarrass not the Gospel by the measure now proposed. Throw us back, if you will, to those evil times. But we demand that when you shall have caused us to be esteemed a sort of land pirates, and we have to preach again at such places as Riddlespurger's and Rantoule swamp, you see to it that we find there the souls who are now confided to our care as pastors of the flock of Christ. Yes, throw us back again to those evil times; but see that you make them evil to none but ourselves. Throw us back, but make it possible for us to fulfil our calling; and by the grace of God we will endure and overcome, and still ask no concessions of you. But if you cannot do this; if you cannot vex us without scattering the sheep, and making them a prey to the wolf of hell, then do we sternly forbid the deed. You may not, and you dare not do it. I say again, if by this measure the evil to be done were only to involve the ministry, without harm or peril to the souls we serve, we might bow to the stroke without despair, if not in submissive silence. We know the work as a cross-bearing service; and as such we love to accomplish it. It pleased God to take the life of the first missionary sent to the negroes, but his successor was instantly at hand. And in the name of the men who are now in the work, or ready to enter it, I pledge for a brave and unflinching perseverance. This is not braggardism. No, it is an honest expression of a most honest feeling. Life or death, we will never desert that Christian work to which we know that God has called us. We ask to be spared no trial; but that the way of trials may be kept open for us. We ask to be spared no labour; but that we may be permitted to labour on, and still more abundantly. Add, if you please, to the amount of our toils. Pile labour on labour more and more. Demand of us still more brick; or even the full tale of brick without straw or stubble; but cut us not off from the clay also. Cut us not off from access to the slaves of the south, when (to say nothing of "concessions to the south") you shall have finished the measure of your demands for the north.

Dr. George Peck said he had listened to the discussion with the same painful anxiety with which he presumed every member of the body and the spectators had listened to it. His attention had been so absorbed—his feelings so interested that he felt himself at the present moment physically unqualified to discharge the duties of wading through the course of argument which he should be compelled to prosecute, as well as meet, should he enter upon the discussion at all. He had a conviction however—although the discussion was one of deep interest to the conference and to the Church—although it was on a subject of vast importance and one

which should not hastily be decided upon—a matter which would probably draw after it consequences which would be seen and felt by the Church and the world for aught he knew down to the end of time—yet so much time had been spent on the subject, so much had been said pro and con, said ably, said to the purpose, said, he was happy to state, in good Christian temper, in all meekness and kindness, in all simplicity and godly sincerity, and honesty besides—and they were now verging so near to the point of time when the conference must adjourn, and so much was yet to be done, that he conceived that the continuance of the discussion much further would be a positive evil on the whole. Good might result from the remarks of the brethren if they were protracted, but he saw no prospect of a termination to this discussion. If the discussion were to be continued, merely for the purpose of giving all brethren who felt an interest in the matter an opportunity to speak to this conference, to the Church, and to their friends at home, he would deem it the solemn duty of this conference to come to a point, and he could not take upon himself the responsibility of protracting the debate longer. He would advertize the conference that if he should enter the argument he would probably speak out the session, and perhaps longer, if permitted. Views were resting upon the speaker's mind which he could not soon pass off. With these remarks he felt disposed to leave the matter with the conference to say whether this discussion should end there or go on. If the conference decided to continue the discussion, he hoped for the privilege of speaking. He would do it as well and as candidly as he could. He would do it as a duty which he owed to God and to the Church, but as before remarked, he had a conviction that the discussion had gone on far enough. He heard, as well as felt, a desire expressed from the members, from the people from without, from the wise and good of all classes, that this discussion should soon come to a termination, or the public feeling would probably become morbid. With these views he would pause.

Mr. Hobart moved that the question be now taken.

Dr. Peck was ready to resign the floor if the conference saw fit to order the previous question.

Bishop Andrew begged that the question might be taken. He was as much interested as any one else, and wished the thing decided.

Mr. Collins said, if this question were forced upon the conference, it would cut off every effort to make a compromise.

It having been determined that the question, "Shall the main question be now put?" should be decided by yeas and nays, the conference proceeded to vote, and ninety-eight voted in the affirmative and eighty in the negative. As the motion required a majority of two-thirds, it was lost.

Bishop Hedding then requested that the conference might not sit this afternoon, in order that the superintendents might have an opportunity to consult together with a view to fixing upon a compromise; and he requested the conference to revive the committee of northern and southern brethren, discharged some days since, that they might meet the bishops in council on this important question.

Dr. Durbin hailed the proposition with delight, but he suggested that it would be better in the circumstances not to revive the committee. Let the bishops meet together—Bishop Andrew as well as the rest—and let them invite any brethren to meet with them whom they pleased. He would give them plenipotentiary powers in the case. This suggestion was agreed to.

Dr. Olin then moved that the case of Bishop Andrew be deferred till to-morrow morning. Agreed to.

The conference then took up a report from the committee on the Book Concern, which consumed the remainder of the session.

FRIDAY, MAY 31.

Bishop Waugh said he had been requested to read to the conference the following communication relating to the present discussion on slavery, and Bishop Andrew's case.

ADDRESS OF THE BISHOPS

To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. and Dear Brethren,—The undersigned respectfully and affectionately offer to your calm consideration the result of their consultation this afternoon in regard to the unpleasant and very delicate question which has been so long and so earnestly debated before your body. They have, with the liveliest interest, watched the progress of the discussion, and have awaited its termination with the deepest soli-

citude. As they have pored over this subject with anxious thought, by day and by night, they have been more and more impressed with the difficulties connected therewith, and the disastrous results which, in their apprehension, are the almost inevitable consequences of present action on the question now pending before you. To the undersigned it is fully apparent that a decision thereon, whether affirmatively or negatively, will most extensively disturb the peace and harmony of that widely-extended brotherhood which has so effectively operated for good in the United States of America and elsewhere during the last sixty years, in the development of a system of active energy, of which union has always been a main element. They have, with deep emotion, inquired, Can anything be done to avoid an evil so much deprecated by every friend of our common Methodism? Long and anxiously have they waited for a satisfactory answer to this inquiry, but they have pained in vain. At this painful crisis they have unanimously concurred in the propriety of recommending the postponement of further action in the case of Bishop Andrew until the ensuing General Conference. It does not enter into the design of the undersigned to argue the propriety of their recommendation, otherwise strong and valid reasons might be adduced in its support. They cannot but think that if the embarrassment of Bishop Andrew should not cease before that time, the next General Conference, representing the pastors, ministers, and people of the several annual conferences, after all the facts in the case shall have passed in review before them, will be better qualified than the present General Conference can be to adjudicate the case wisely and discreetly. Until the cessation of the embarrassment, or the expiration of the interval between the present and the ensuing General Conference, the undersigned believe that such a division of the work of the general superintendency might be made without any infraction of a constitutional principle, as would fully employ Bishop Andrew in those sections of the Church in which his presence and services would be welcome and cordial. If the course pursued on this occasion by the undersigned be deemed a novel one, they persuade themselves that their justification, in the view of all candid and peace-loving persons, will be found in their strong desire to prevent disunion, and to promote harmony in the Church.

Very respectfully and affectionately submitted,

JOSHUA SOULE,
ELIJAH HEDDING,
B. WAUGH,
T. A. MORRIS.

Thursday afternoon, May 30, 1844.

Mr. Collins moved the adoption of the suggestion. Mr. Finley and Mr. Raper wished time to think about it.

Mr. Mitchell moved that the whole subject lie on the table for one day.

Mr. Collins accepted the amendment.

Mr. Haven could not see the propriety of laying it on the table. Every member had made up his mind on the main question, and this course was only postponing an evil which overhung their minds and interfered with their deliberations.

Dr. Bangs thought it had better be referred to a committee of nine, or three from each of the three sections of the conference, in reference to their sentiments on slavery.

Mr. Slicer suggested that this communication from the episcopacy was from the north, south, east, and west, by representation, and included the concentrated wisdom of the episcopacy, and he thought it both uncourteous and impolitic to refer it again. Let it be postponed until the afternoon.

Mr. Hamline thought the paper had better be referred to a committee, and be reported on this afternoon.

Mr. Collins opposed a committee, and urged the postponement of the matter until to-morrow morning.

Mr. Crowder approved of Mr. Collins's motion, only he wished it had been to the afternoon instead. The paper was of the character of a peace-making proposition.

Mr. Winner proposed an amendment, that the subject be postponed until four o'clock. Laid on the table.

Dr. Bangs urged his suggestion as to the committee.

Dr. Olin said the faint hopes he had entertained when the step was taken which led to this communication were well nigh blasted. He acknowledged this with deep and heartfelt sorrow. He thought the best course under all the circumstances

was to appoint a committee; as a proposition from the episcopacy, the communication was entitled to the most respectful and serious deliberation. Its reference to a committee need not prevent, and he hoped it would not, all necessary conversation among the delegates in the interim, or interfere with the free and full discussion of the matter between the various delegations. It was right that the conference should know from every member what he thought would be the effect of adopting the suggestion, in that portion of the Church where he laboured; and brethren ought to have time to consider and consult whether, in their sober, prayerful judgment, they thought the proposition was so satisfactory as to prevent the great evils that threatened them; whether they thought it too weak or too strong, for the purpose it contemplated, and whether they thought it only a postponement of an evil that might be settled at once.

Mr. J. T. Peck said he was compelled to differ from most of his brethren as to the nature of this document. He thought the darkness was increased, and the conference deeper in the mire than ever. He wished and was resolved to abide by the main question. When the bishops' paper was before them they had a definite point under consideration, and to that he would adhere—it was simply whether they should frankly confess that all they had said upon the subject was an error and premature, give up all that they had proposed to do, and leave the thing to the operation of time, when they had already refused to do so. He would stand by his principles, or by them he would fall in the dust.

Mr. Cartwright made some remarks in favour of a postponement of further discussion of the question, under present circumstances.

Mr. Perkins and Mr. Dow each opposed the reference to a committee. The latter gentleman said New-England had been assailed, and her delegates hitherto had had no opportunity of speaking in her defence, nor indeed to the main question, which they claimed a right to do.

Dr. Durbin moved to take up the order of the day, that those members who wished to speak might have the opportunity of doing so. They, however, declined availing themselves of the opportunity on the ground that it was a most unfavourable period.

The communication was finally referred, and the further debate of the question postponed until the committee should report.

Report of Committee on Book Concern, on reorganizing the N. Y. Book Committee.

Dr. Bangs,—Must oppose the adoption of this part of the report, as it affected an entire revolution in the Book Concern. He had been an editor many years, and should not have liked to have his advisers taken away from him. He did not know whether the editors had recommended this proposition.

Mr. Bowen would state the reasons that had resulted in recommending this change. The Book Committee were anxious to divide the responsibility with the editors. He then detailed the manner in which books were prepared for publication by the committee. They had no disposition to complain of the present Book Committee; but they thought the change in many respects desirable, and it would still leave five out of the nine members of the committee resident in this city.

Mr. Sanford thought it ought to be known what had been the previous practice. Heretofore the editor was under no obligation to examine a work previous to its publication. Still, he thought, the proposed measure was calculated to take away one of the guards against the publication of improper works. In this age of revolution and precipitancy it was not well to take away any guards. For his part he should oppose the innovation.

Mr. Early said the Book Concern at New-York belonged to the north, and to the south, and to the east, and to the west. The present organization was one calculated to embarrass a business man. He regretted that the subject was introduced in the report—still it was not revolutionary. A practical operation of the present law was bad, inasmuch as the committee could seldom be at home, and where must the editor find them? The Book Committee at New-York had their hands full, and they were unable to give proper attention to the matter. Under the present system, if the agent could not find a Book Committee that would look through his glasses, he must be greatly embarrassed. It was the duty and interest of the agents to publish such works as would be acceptable to the Church, and promote the spread of Christian knowledge. Fix the responsibility on the editor, and he would feel himself bound to use all necessary caution and prudence.

He declared that there was, and had been for many years, a great error somewhere, and strongly advocated the present reorganization.

Mr. Sandford moved that the resolution be laid on the table; but for want of a seconder the motion fell to the ground.

Mr. Ames said, that under the present system, the responsibility was not fixed anywhere, and it was proposed to fix it upon the editors. That the present committee could ever meet together was almost impossible. He did not wish to find fault with the members of the committee. He could not agree with Dr. Bangs, that this was a great alteration. He hoped the conference would harmonize with the committee, and adopt the report.

Dr. Simpson understood the amendment to be, that the agents may publish any work that the editors recommend. At present the committee had only a veto power.

Dr. Bond said the Church ought to hold to strict responsibility all its agents and editors. An editor or agent might at present do immense mischief before the day of responsibility arrived. There was no power to remove him before the next General Conference. There had been one case which proved so long a delay to be injurious, and therefore objectionable.

Mr. Raper said the committee had given notice to the editors, and requested their views on this subject. In the judgment of the committee the responsibility was amply provided for.

Dr. Peck had given his opinion in favour of the report, for he thought the reorganization of the Book Committee might be improved.

The President said that was not the question before the conference.

Dr. Peck said, if he understood the report, it proposed a different organization of the Book Committee, and to devolve the responsibility of the publications of the Concern entirely upon the editors; if so, it would be pertinent to show that the present organization of the committee is defective, and the responsibility for the publications wrongly vested. Now, though the editor has a veto power, still when the committee recommends the publication of a work, he will be disposed to treat their decision with great deference, and may not under such circumstances exercise so rigid a scrutiny as he would do if he had a greater amount of responsibility resting upon him in the matter. I could wish, sir, that there might be in the editorial corps such an amount of talent and learning, that the decisions upon the various manuscripts offered for publication may be safely confided with them. Then the public would know who was responsible. As it is, no one is properly responsible but the poor editor, and he is trammelled with an advisory committee not responsible for its acts to anybody. A manuscript is handed over by the agent or editor to the committee for examination. The whole committee, of course, cannot hear it read: as their only resort they give it to a sub-committee. That sub-committee read it with more or less care, according to the time they have to bestow upon it, or the interest they feel in the subject of which it treats. They may in some instances report favourably merely to get rid of the thing, expecting that the editor will use his own judgment at last. After the report is read and adopted, they perhaps gravely tell the editor, "You are not obliged to sanction our report—do as you please, and we will be satisfied." This is rather a good-natured way of casting the burden at last upon the editor: but the system is liable to serious objections. This business of examining manuscripts is exceedingly burdensome to the preachers in the city—nor can they do it as it should be done. They may be qualified for the work, and they may not, for they are stationed in the city without reference to any such literary qualifications. The speaker meant no reflections upon the preachers in the city of New-York, or upon the New-York Conference. A committee constituted by virtue of appointment in the city, and obliged to examine manuscripts by the means of a sub-committee, could not in the nature of the case be possessed of the competency and direct responsibility to the public which are certainly desirable in the premises. With these remarks, Dr. P. would submit the question to the wisdom of the conference.

The resolution was finally adopted.

Proposal to amend Discipline in Cases of Indebtedness to the Book Concern.

The report also had reference to security being given in certain cases of indebtedness to the Book Concern, and proposed an amendment in the Discipline, to the effect that no brethren who were indebted to the Book Concern should have any claim upon its funds. This gave rise to a lengthened conversation, during which

Mr. Sandford said, that it appeared to him desirable that they should have some

definite rule on this subject, for it often happened that persons became indebted to the Concern, and were subsequently located, and then perhaps they removed, and the agents had no means of discovering whither they were gone.

Mr. Winner thought the amendment in its present phraseology involved an oppressive principle.

Mr. Ferguson thought it might apply with great hardship to the widows and orphans of preachers, and moved an amendment less stringent in its provisions.

The conversation was continued to the hour of adjournment.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Richmond Christian Advocate.

On motion of Mr. Leroy M. Lee, report of the Book Committee, No. 2, was taken up, and a resolution recommending the continued publication of the Richmond Christian Advocate was brought under consideration.

Mr. Lee said the present resolution might be adopted without at all interfering with the action of the conference upon the report of the Book Committee respecting the grant they proposed to make to the Richmond Christian Advocate. There was a reason for early action upon the resolution, authorizing the continuance of the paper, that he had not intended to offer in moving the adoption of the report. But since the brother from New-York had interposed an objection, he would now give his reason for introducing the matter. It was well known to many that the Richmond Christian Advocate had enemies—one enemy not in that body—anxious to injure it. And the simple fact that the resolution now before them had been laid on the table when first presented;—and it was done at his instance, in order to give time for the chairman of our Publishing Committee and myself to meet the committee on the Book Concern;—this fact had been used in Richmond for the purpose of injuring the paper. He had received a letter last evening, informing him that the fact of laying the report on the table was there represented as an indication of the purpose of the General Conference to discontinue the paper. It was in view of this attempt to prejudice the reputation of the paper that he had moved to take up the report. He wished the conference to act on this subject at once, and by the adoption of the report correct the erroneous impression which had been sought to be made on the public mind.

The report was adopted.

Mr. Early moved that the report of the Book Committee, No. 6, be taken up, which was carried.

Mr. Rice moved that the report be so amended as to relieve the members of the New-York Conference from acting on the Book Committee. He said it was a most onerous duty to be compelled, in addition to their pastoral duties, to superintend the publication of the books. As a member of that conference he wished to be relieved. He contended that it was unjust to their respective charges, inasmuch as they paid the salaries of their ministers; who, from the additional labours imposed on them by the Book Concern, were unable to perform their duties faithfully.

The report was adopted, after considerable discussion, in all its main features.

(In explanation of the somewhat imperfect report of this day's proceedings, we may say that the official reporter was, from peculiar circumstances, necessarily absent from the conference, and had to rely upon such casual assistance as he could procure.)

SATURDAY, JUNE 1.

The Bishops' Communication.

Bishop Hedding wished to withdraw his signature from the document presented yesterday. He had not been drawn or persuaded into it. But in signing it he had been governed by two reasons, which he thought it his duty to present. First, he signed it as a peace measure. Second, he believed it would be generally acceptable to the conference. In both these expectations he was disappointed. Facts had come to his knowledge which induced him to believe that it would not make peace, and that it might be productive of a lengthened debate, and, instead of removing, would only increase the difficulty. He therefore wished his name to be withdrawn, but would submit if the conference decided that he had no authority to do so. No objection was made.

Bishop Waugh said that in regard to the same document a few remarks might not be unnecessary. He wished his name to remain, unless he saw other reasons

than had yet appeared. He came into the measure without persuasion or entreaty, as the result of his own thoughts and voluntary inclination, though slowly and reluctantly. Yet it was under a train of circumstances that left him little or no option in the premises. He adopted it as a last resort, and with little hope of its success. It did, however, appear to him that it would be better to put that view before the General Conference, and let it take its course, and so far as himself was concerned, he should be perfectly satisfied with the result. He should exceedingly regret if the communication were the occasion of a protracted debate, but he hoped that would not be the case. He did not feel at liberty to withdraw his name from a paper that he designed to be for the preservation of the Church.

Bishop Morris wished his name to remain attached to that document, as a testimony that he had done what he could to preserve the unity of the body.

Bishop Soule said, perhaps he ought to offer a few words in connection with his colleagues, and it afforded him pleasure to receive the assurances that they were in no way influenced or persuaded to put their signatures to that paper. He acknowledged that they went into the measure as freely and fully, and under the same conviction, as himself. Conference were aware that this matter came before the superintendents on motion. He put his signature to the document with the same views and under the same convictions as his very worthy colleagues did, and neither his views nor his convictions were changed in any way. And he wished his signature to that document to go forth through a thousand channels to the world. It is already before the American people, and he might not, and would not, withdraw it.

Dr. Bangs moved that the communication lie on the table.

Mr. Early called for the ayes and noes, and the vote being taken, there were yeas 95, nays 83. The communication was therefore laid on the table.

Dr. Bangs said it was well known that he had used every effort in his power to have this matter brought to a compromise, and he had indulged a hope that this would be the result. It was with that view that he laboured to have this document referred to a committee. But from what had been told him by members from the north and south, not a vestige of this hope remained, and he would now urge immediate action upon the substitute, if it was before the house. He believed wisdom, and prudence, and Christianity, and brotherly love dictated that course, and that further discussion would not change one mind.

Dr. Winans said the last speaker had referred to the south, and his remarks in their connection went to say that the south were opposed to the proposition from the superintendents. He begged to say that the southern delegates were of one mind to entertain the proposition of the superintendents.

Dr. Bangs explained that he did not mean to say that the south objected to the proposal of the bishops, but that the conference could not come to any general compromise on the subject. He should not, himself, move the previous question.

Mr. Collins opposed the motion for taking up the order of the day. He had not given up all hopes of peace; and if they would wait a few minutes and listen to a proposal from Dr. Durbin, he thought a compromise might yet be effected. They were bound to make a settlement of the question, he knew, but in their proposed action the bishops were against them; and if they would withdraw their names from the communication they had made, and allow Dr. Durbin to use it as his own, he (Mr. Collins) believed a plan of pacification might still be concocted. The proposition was, as a last effort to bring peace and save the Church from division, to add to the suggestion of the episcopacy some resolutions expressive of the regret of that General Conference that Bishop Andrew had become connected with slavery, and request him to rid himself of the embarrassment as soon as possible; and, in addition, a resolution to take off the journals all that related to the coloured testimony question. He thought such a measure would answer their purpose, and heal the wound of the Church.

Mr. Blake was pursuing his labours as a minister among the coloured people, and little thought that the question of slavery would be brought up. He had no anticipation of a storm, but he found that the foundations of the great deep were broken up, and the ark of their Church was floating on the waves. But he thanked God that in the distance he saw a blessed Ararat. He went on describing the various forms under which slavery had been discussed in the present conference, alluded to the definitions of the episcopal office during the debate, and thought that Dr. Durbin's substitute would not reconcile the difficulties.

Mr. Longstreet said, as long as there was any hope of reconciliation, he would

desire that this question be postponed. As yet, the south had not made one proposition to adjust the matter amicably. He trusted, therefore, that the door would not be closed. Time was a matter of very little consequence compared with the importance of the questions at issue. He wished to wait, and see what time would bring forth.

Dr. Paine said he was a man of peace. He deeply regretted to hear unkind words from both sides. He never dealt in wholesale denunciation. The south felt calm as they could feel when the importance of the question was considered. He considered the substitute to be mandatory. It acted as a mandamus; it had been so described. This placed the south in an awkward position. He hoped some ground would be proposed by the north that both could occupy. If there was no such common ground, the south was prepared for the result.

Mr. Porter recalled the attention of the conference to the discussion of the last fortnight as evidence of the peace-loving character of the northern members. They wanted to be one body. He did not believe they could live as one body with anything less than the substitute. He asked what was the prospect of peace—Bishop Andrew had declared that he could not recede from his position, and the south had taken the same ground. It was of no use to discuss the question further, therefore, but they had better come up square to the question, and decide the point at once, that the people might be satisfied.

Mr. Mitchell proposed an amendment, to be appended to the resolution, to the effect that the bishop should so resign until a majority of the annual conferences desired him to resume his office. Mr. M. did not think it necessary to enter into a discussion whether the resolution respecting Bishop Andrew was advisory or mandatory. He wished the substitute to come before the conference this morning.

On motion, the order of the day was taken up.

Bishop Soule said he had good reason to believe that brethren had entertained erroneous views with respect to the position he occupied at the time he addressed the conference on this subject; and he now wished to correct those views, that there might be a proper understanding in the matter before they had action on the substitute. It must have occurred to the brethren that his remarks at that time were entirely irrelevant, except on the understanding that the resolution was mandatory. He looked upon it as suspending Bishop Andrew. There was a great difference between suspension and advice. If this action was not intended to be judicial, he should withdraw many of his remarks. If it was a mandatory act, it was judicial. One member said it was merely a request to Bishop Andrew to resign; but several had declared it to be judicial, and were not contradicted. Again: the argument was, that slavery could not exist in the episcopacy of the Methodist Church. One brother had said, that if the resolution passed, Bishop Andrew was still a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. If this was the case, his remarks, he must repeat, were irrelevant. He considered the proceeding as a judicial one, suspending brother Andrew from his duties as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

DECISION OF THE QUESTION.

Mr. J. T. Peck moved the previous (that is, the main) question, which was carried. The resolution was then read, and the ayes and noes were taken; Bishop Soule observing, that definite action must necessarily be hereafter taken to decide whether the resolution was mandatory or advisory. The votes were given amid the most profound stillness.

The resolution (Mr. Finley's substitute) reads as follows:—

"Whereas the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery, by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not, in some places, entirely prevent it; therefore,

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains."

The yeas and nays being called by delegations, were as follow:—

YEAS.

New-York Conference—Nathan Bangs, Stephen Olin, Phineas Rice, George Peck, John B. Stratten, Peter P. Sandford, Fitch Reed, Samuel D. Ferguson, Ste-

phen Martindale, Marvin Richardson. *Troy*—Truman Seymour, John M. Wever, James Covell, jun., Tobias Spicer, Seymour Coleman, James B. Houghtaling, Jesse T. Peck. *Providence*—J. Lovejoy, F. Upham, S. Benton, Paul Townsend. *New-Hampshire*—Elihu Scott, J. Perkins, Samuel Kelly, S. Chamberlain, John G. Dow, J. Spaulding, C. D. Cahoon, William D. Cass. *New-England*—J. Porter, D. S. King, P. Crandall, C. Adams, G. Pickering. *Pittsburg*—William Hunter, H. J. Clark, J. Spencer, S. Elliott, R. Boyd, S. Wakefield, J. Drummond. *Maine*—M. Hill, E. Robinson, D. B. Randall, C. W. Morse, J. Hobart, Heman Nickerson, G. Webber. *Black River*—A. D. Peck, A. Adams, G. Baker, W. W. Ninde. *Erie*—J. J. Steadman, John Bain, G. W. Clark, J. Robinson, T. Goodwin. *Oneida*—J. M. Snyder, S. Comfort, N. Rounds, D. A. Shepherd, H. F. Row, E. Bowen, D. Holmes, jun. *Michigan*—E. Crane, A. Billings, J. A. Baughman. *Rock River*—B. Weed, H. W. Reed, J. T. Mitchell. *Genesee*—G. Filmore, S. Luckey, A. Steele, F. G. Hibbard, S. Seager, A. Abell, W. Hosmer, J. B. Alverson. *North Ohio*—E. Thompson, J. H. Power, A. Poe, E. Yocum, W. Runnells. *Illinois*—P. Akers, P. Cartwright. *Ohio*—C. Elliott, William H. Raper, J. M. Trimble, J. B. Finley, L. L. Hamline, Z. Connell, J. Ferree. *Indiana*—M. Simpson, A. Wiley, E. R. Ames, J. Miller, C. W. Ruter, A. Wood, A. Eddy, J. Havens. *Texas*—J. Clark. *Baltimore*—J. A. Collins, A. Griffith, J. Bear, N. J. B. Morgan, J. Davis. *Philadelphia*—J. P. Durbin, L. Scott. *New-Jersey*—I. Winner, J. S. Porter, J. K. Shaw—111.

NAYS.

New-York Conference—C. W. Carpenter. *Michigan*—G. Smith. *Rock River*—J. Sinclair. *Illinois*—J. Stamper, J. Van Cleve, N. G. Berryman. *Kentucky*—H. B. Bascom, W. Gunn, H. H. Kavanaugh, E. Stevenson, B. T. Crouch, G. W. Brush. *Ohio*—E. W. Sehon. *Holston*—E. F. Sevier, S. Patten, T. Stringfield. *Tennessee*—R. Paine, J. B. M'Ferrin, A. L. P. Green, T. Maddin. *Missouri*—W. W. Redman, W. Patten, J. C. Berryman, J. M. Jameson. *North Carolina*—J. Jameson, Peter Doub, H. G. Leigh. *Memphis*—G. W. D. Harris, S. S. Moody, William M'Mahon, T. Joyner. *Arkansas*—J. C. Parker, W. P. Ratcliffe, A. Hunter. *Virginia*—J. Early, T. Crowder, W. A. Smith, L. M. Lee. *Mississippi*—William Winans, B. M. Drake, J. Lane, G. M. Rogers. *Texas*—L. Fowler. *Alabama*—J. Boring, J. Hamilton, William Murrah, G. Garrett. *Georgia*—G. F. Pierce, W. J. Parks, L. Pierce, J. W. Glenn, J. E. Evans, A. B. Longstreet. *South Carolina*—William Capers, W. M. Wightman, C. Betts, S. Dunwoody, H. A. C. Walker. *Baltimore*—H. Slicer, J. A. Gere, T. B. Sargent, C. B. Tippet, G. Hildt. *Philadelphia*—T. J. Thompson, H. White, W. Cooper, I. T. Cooper. *New-Jersey*—Thomas Neal, Thomas Sovereign—69.

So the resolution was adopted—yeas, 111; nays, 69.

After some conversation on the question, How far the vote gave Mr. Finley's substitute the authority of an original resolution? Dr. Pierce rose to address the conference. It would be within the recollection of the members and spectators who had listened to this discussion with so much interest, that, in the event of the conference deciding upon the passage of this resolution, the southern delegation had declared that they would enter their solemn protest against it, without a dissenting voice or faltering step. They should, at the earliest possible moment, do so, and it should be a manly, ministerial, and proper protest against this action of the conference, as an extra-judicial act, that their sentiments on the subject might go down to posterity.

He contended that, however conscientiously—and he gave them full credit for that—they had acted, still they had acted contrary to the rule of compromise. The constitutionality, or otherwise, of their proceeding would probably be tried before other tribunals. It had never entered into his heart in anything to depart from the spirit and intention of the Discipline of the Church, and those who were his brethren in the south were of the same mind. He believed that, when the public mind had been sounded, and the deep tones of public opinion came peeling up from all quarters of the connection, there would be a verdict in favour of the south.

Dr. Winans and Mr. Early made some observations on the peculiarity of their positions; and, after some little conversation, the conference adjourned until Monday morning at half-past eight.

MONDAY, JUNE 3.

Mr. Slicer proposed the following resolutions:—

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that the vote of Saturday last, in the case of Bishop Andrew, be understood as advisory only, and not in the light of a judicial mandate.

"Resolved, 2dly, That the final disposition of Bishop Andrew's case be postponed until the General Conference of 1848, in conformity with the suggestion of the bishops, in their address to the conference on Friday, 31st May.

"H. SLICER,

"T. B. SARGENT."

Mr. Slicer introduced the resolutions with a few appropriate remarks, and they were, for the present, laid on the table.

Dr. Capers then introduced the following resolutions, which were finally referred to a committee of nine, with instructions to report as soon as possible:—

"Be it resolved by the delegates of all the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That we recommend to the annual conferences to suspend the constitutional restrictions which limit the powers of the General Conference so far, and so far only, as to allow of the following alterations in the government of the Church, viz.:—

"1. That the Methodist Episcopal Church, in these United States and Territories, and the republic of Texas, shall constitute two General Conferences, to meet quadrennially, the one at some place *south*, and the other *north* of the line which now divides between the states commonly designated as free states and those in which slavery exists.

"2. That each one of the two General Conferences thus constituted shall have full powers, under the limitations and restrictions which are now of force and binding on the General Conference, to make rules and regulations for the Church, within their territorial limits, respectively, and to elect bishops for the same.

"3. That the two General Conferences aforesaid shall severally have jurisdiction as follows:—The southern General Conference shall comprehend the states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, and the states and territories lying southerly thereto, and also the republic of Texas, to be known and designated by the title of the 'Southern General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States.' And the Northern General Conference to comprehend all those states lying north of the states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, as above, to be known and designated by the title of the 'Northern General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.'

"4. And be it further resolved, That as soon as three-fourths of all the members of all the annual conferences shall have voted on these resolutions, and shall approve the same, the said Southern and Northern General Conferences shall be deemed as having been constituted by such approval; and it shall be competent for the southern annual conferences to elect delegates to said Southern General Conference, to meet in the city of Nashville, Tennessee, on the first of May, 1848, or sooner, if a majority of two-thirds of the members of the annual conferences composing that General Conference shall desire the same.

"5. And be it further resolved, as aforesaid, That the Book Concerns at New-York and Cincinnati shall be held and conducted as the property and for the benefit of all the annual conferences as heretofore:—the editors and agents to be elected once in four years at the time of the session of the Northern General Conference, and the votes of the Southern General Conference to be cast by delegates of that conference attending the northern for that purpose.

"6. And be it further resolved, That our Church organization for foreign missions shall be maintained and conducted jointly between the two General Conferences as one Church, in such manner as shall be agreed upon from time to time between the two great branches of the Church as represented in the said two conferences."

Mr. Drake then offered a resolution proposing an amendment in reference to requiring members on their admission to give "satisfactory assurance of the correctness of their faith." The amendment proposed to leave out these words.

Mr. Sandford, of New-York, opposed it very strenuously. He thought it would open the door for the admission of laxity of sentiment and discipline to an alarming extent, and at a time too when there was special need of care upon this point.

If this barrier were removed, there would be nothing to hinder persons holding the most heterodox sentiments in matters of religious truth entering the society. He prayed the conference not to break down the bulwarks for the preservation of their unanimity and purity of doctrine.

Mr. Crowder was of the same opinion; for though the rule had been attended with some difficulty and some diversity of administration, these were comparatively unimportant in view of the great safeguard afforded to the articles of our religion.

Dr. Smith, of Virginia, contended that the rule as it now stood subjected every applicant to just such a condition of membership as the minister to whom the application was made, chose. The condition, therefore, was practically the will of the preacher. Nor was the rule introduced in the proper way. He suggested (and it would be in accordance with his own practice) that the questions proposed in cases of adult baptism were sufficient for the purpose of ascertaining that the applicant entertained Christian sentiments.

Dr. Winans objected to any doctrinal tests whatever. The main reason why such great unanimity of doctrinal sentiment prevailed in the Methodist body was, that they had kept clear of creeds and tests, and allowed freedom of private opinion while they taught uniformity on the great cardinal points of Christian revelation. If they began to insist upon tests as to doctrinal views, they would find opposition and discontent, and they would be split into schisms. Methodism had prospered without such tests.

Mr. Slicer said that he was opposed to the examination of candidates for membership in the doctrines of the body. If they attempted this iron-bedstead system, lengthening some and shortening others, to make them conform, they would find it lead to mischief. Many members entered the Church with erroneous views, but with care and instruction they got right.

Bishop Hedding said the conference were wasting time over a comparatively unimportant matter, while they had much necessary and important business to transact.

Dr. Pierce said he introduced the present rule, against which so much was now said, and he did so because he knew that some of the brethren had fallen into the habit of throwing their net broad-cast during revivals, and taking in all sorts of people who could shout, and pray, and weep, and this had become so great an evil that it was necessary to take some steps in the matter. The rule was not proposed without much thought, and he could not now see all the causes of alarm which the brethren had conjured up.

The motion, amended so as to accord with the suggestion of Dr. Smith, was then put and lost, and the original motion carried.

The report on boundaries was then taken up and passed with very little discussion. The General Conference refused permission to the New-York Conference to divide itself during the ensuing four years.

The hour of adjournment arrived before the report was concluded. Bishop Soule announced that Bishop Andrew had gone home, and would not be present at any further sittings of the present conference. Adjourned to half-past three.

TUESDAY, JUNE 4.

Report of the Committee on Slavery.

The committee on slavery reported in favour of rescinding the resolution passed at the last General Conference on coloured testimony.

Dr. Winans moved that it lie on the table, which was lost.

Mr. J. A. Collins moved as an amendment that the whole matter relating to the case of Silas Comfort be stricken from the journals. If they merely struck out the resolution they left the appeal of Silas Comfort still there with all its bearings upon the other side of the question, and if they meant to reach this case at all, they must sweep from the records the whole business. He never doubted that the General Conference acted wrong in entertaining that appeal. He wished them now to act fairly in the matter, and erase every vestige by a declaratory resolution as to the impropriety of that appeal.

Dr. Winans, of Mississippi, then moved to lay the whole subject on the table. Yesterday they had referred to a committee several resolutions relative to the division of the Church, and he thought they ought not to do anything on this subject until they had a report from that committee. If they were to part, he desired to

part in peace, but if they were to remain together for ever quarrelling, then they (the south) would fight it out to the last.

Dr Peck said there was no sort of disagreement in the committee in relation to the appeal of Silas Comfort. On the part of the north it was conceded that if that appeal had been so acted upon as to constitute a rule or establish a principle, the act should be set aside. But on examining the journals it was found the appeal was not entertained. The committee, therefore, was not inclined to pursue the matter any further, and they thought it might as well be given up.

On motion of Dr. Bangs the further consideration of the report was postponed until the committee on Dr. Caper's resolutions had brought in their report.

Dr. Capers asked permission for said committee to attend to the business confided to them, during conference hours.

Mr. Sandford (who was a member of the committee) hoped the request would not be granted, or that conference would not have an afternoon session.

The request being acceded to, it was moved that Mr. Sandford be excused from serving on the committee, which was lost.

Mr. Sandford wished to know whether the conference had power to drive any member from its floor during its session, and refused to leave.

The Report on Temperance.

The special order of the day was then taken up. It was the report of the Committee on Temperance.

Mr. Collins moved the postponement of the question, which was lost.

Mr. Collins and Mr. M'Ferrin then indulged in some little pleasantry upon a slight ambiguity in the wording of the resolution, which Mr. Slicer defended.

The preamble and resolutions were then read a second time. After adverting to the fact that there were sixteen votes short of the requisite majority of the members of the annual conferences to make it constitutionally obligatory upon the Church, it proceeded:—

"Your committee have had under consideration a communication from Rev. John Marsh, Secretary of the American Temperance Union, and beg leave to offer the following resolutions: Whereas, the use of intoxicating drinks tends to the formation of intemperate appetites and habits, and is subversive of the health, morals, domestic peace and happiness of mankind,

"And, whereas, total abstinence is the only safeguard against all these evils,

"And, whereas, the rule of our faith and practice not only pronounces a wo against the drunkards of Ephraim, but also upon him who puts his bottle to his neighbour's mouth:

"Therefore,

"Resolved, 1st. By the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That we cordially approve of the design and recommend the pledge of the American Temperance Union.

"Resolved, 2d. That we recommend to all our preachers, travelling and local, and to all our members and friends, to give to the temperance reformation (now in successful progress in this and other countries) their unreserved approval and earnest and liberal support."

Dr. Bangs moved, as an amendment, the insertion of the words, "as a beverage," after the words, "intoxicating drinks."

Mr. Slicer said, that whenever there was a counsel to acquit there was also a flaw in the indictment.

Dr. Bangs explained, that Mr. Slicer had misinterpreted his motives and intention. The preamble at present was less definite than seemed to him advisable. He merely designed to point it out as a technical omission.

Mr. Coleman thought the preamble was correct enough. He had yet to be convinced that a man could take intoxicating liquors either as a medicine or in any other way, without being in danger of becoming an inebriate. It had never been proved, and it never could be proved!

Mr. M'Ferrin said, if the object of the resolutions was to form a temperance society, he would go the whole figure. Or if the object was to get signatures, ("We the undersigned," commencing the quotation of the pledge submitted in the report,) he was ready to give his.

Mr. Slicer explained that the report embraced two subjects; first, the action of the annual conferences upon the question, and, secondly, the communication from the Rev. J. Marsh, on behalf of the American Temperance Society.

Mr. M^r Ferrin continued. The chairman of the committee had said that the report had two objects. One was the action of the annual conferences. The committee on this point report that there is not a constitutional majority for the alteration of the present rule. The second was the formation of a temperance society. The first had failed, and now they were called upon to adopt the second. He was a temperance man, a member of many temperance societies, and had not the least objection to become a member of another.

Mr. Collins inquired whether he was to understand the report as recommending the adoption of the report from the Committee on Revisal.

Mr. Slicer answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Collins said, then he must oppose that feature in the preamble to the report, and moved that it then lie on the table, which was lost.

Mr. Collins then resumed. He must oppose it, because if they passed it, they pledged themselves to the other report, and virtually passed that also. It was easy enough to apply harsh epithets, to kill a thing by giving it a bad name. There was an old adage to that effect: "Give a dog a bad name," &c. And they had heard it said that to get on one side of this question was mere quibbling. He was not afraid to march up to his responsibilities anywhere. His objection was one which must be at the door of every man's heart and conscience, who believed they had any constitution or Discipline at all. This was an attempt, a design, to put that into the Discipline by a mere majority, which could not be put there constitutionally. This action was tried constitutionally in 1836, and failed, and again in 1840, and had again failed. And despairing of obtaining a majority in the manner pointed out by the Discipline, it was now sought to insert a new rule in the General Rules by a mere majority vote of the General Conference. He claimed to be as ardently attached to the temperance cause as any member on that floor. He had embraced its principles when many now present ridiculed and repudiated them, but he objected to any new test of membership being thus introduced into the Discipline. This was a "quibble," unquestionably. They would never get the Church by a constitutional vote to sanction this resolution. He, for one, would oppose it to the utmost of his power. Majorities ought to be cautious how they acted in matters of such importance as this, or they would occasion serious ruptures in the Church.

Mr. Early thought no member would accuse the southern members of being opposed to temperance principles, or of being too fond of the cup. He had not tasted a dram for forty years past, and he was at this time the president of a total abstinence society, numbering one thousand slaves and free persons of colour; and whenever he could find an opportunity to turn from his pastoral duties he lectured on temperance. There were none about him who were not temperance men, both in principle and practice. But they saw no ground for the introduction of new tests of membership, and had, therefore, gone against this recommendation. If the General Conference passed this resolution in violation of constitutional rules, they would not get southern men to enforce it. He referred to the constitutional vote on the subject, and begged the conference not to pass a rule on the subject by a majority vote, when they had been unable to pass it constitutionally; he begged them especially not to pass it at this time, when nine of their members were absent attending to other duties. He moved the postponement of the question, which was carried.

Mr. J. T. Peck moved that the conference now take up the report of the Committee on Revisal.

Report of the Committee on the Book Concern.

An amendment, so as to take up the report of the Committee on the Book Concern, was offered.

Mr. Ruter hoped the report on the Book Concern would be taken up, for they could not get at the other constitutionally, and they would be spending their time in vain.

The report of the Book Committee was taken up.

The first resolution referred to the reduction of prices of books to the Texas preachers, or allowing sixty per cent. discount.

Mr. Sandford opposed this: it would be giving them at less than they cost, and opening a door to the public to believe that the books cost much less than they did. The motion was finally adopted on a much modified scale.

The second resolution recommended the publication of a cheap edition of our standard works.

Mr. Sandford said that such publications would seriously injure the sale of the better editions. Our standard works did not afford a great profit now, and if the sale were slower, the profit would be less. It was impossible for the Methodist Episcopal Book Concern to compete with the cheap literature of the day, and the more they attempted it, the more would they injure the institution itself, and he thought they ought to be very cautious in attempting such an enterprise. Publishers, in general, allowed but little discount; he thought scarcely enough; and sold a single copy of a work at almost wholesale price. Would the preachers take our books for sale without discount? And if not, he did not see how they could expect to get out such an edition as now recommended. He deemed it an utter impossibility; for, if done at all, it must be in such a way as would afford but little pecuniary advantage to compensate for the risk and labour. If the preachers would give up their profit for the sake of bringing these works freely before the public, then it might be done, but he thought not otherwise.

Mr. Stringfield said, the remarks of brother Sandford were entitled to consideration; but pecuniary profit or loss was a small thing compared with the spread of piety and knowledge. The Book Room of the Methodist Episcopal Church ought not to be behind the age. The people were leaving it; they could get books cheaper from parties who had not half the capital, and it behooved them to meet the wants of their people.

Mr. Sovereign was in favour of the report. Cheap books were wanted, and must be had; or their books would be overlooked by the public. Within his own experience he could have sold five where he had sold one, had they been cheaper.

Mr. Green did not believe in getting up a cheap edition of our standard works. Our standard books were bought to be put into libraries, and to get them on cheap paper and in cheap binding would have an injurious effect. Where books were likely to pass through but one edition, it might be well to get them up cheap; but with the standard works, he would rather go for improving the paper, binding, and printing, and making them better, instead of worse.

Mr. Wright thought it unadvisable to adopt this resolution. The saving could only be realized in the paper, materials, or in the style of binding, and perhaps a little in the ink. The cost of press-work would be the same. A coarse paper, where stereotype plates were used, was much more injurious than fine paper. Two editions would also be troublesome.

Mr. Lane agreed with the last speaker. The price of our books was not higher than books generally—not as high, if the materials were taken into consideration. With books of the same materials they would compare to great advantage. The agents had ample means of ascertaining this, as they were frequently called upon to purchase books not in their catalogue. Books sold at the Book Room for seventy-five cents, were sold by others at one dollar, and others in the same proportion. It was probable that some of our books might be reduced in price, and they would be so reduced, but as a general thing it would be impossible to reduce them much while they allowed the present discount. If they were called upon to publish a cheap edition of the standard works, they should want those works defined, for the General Conference certainly would not deem it advisable to instruct their agents to publish a cheap edition of all the standard works. There must be a selection. He doubted whether any real good would result from the change.

The resolution was laid on the table.

Another resolution proposed that the editors of the conference newspapers be instructed to confine their obituaries to thirty lines.

Dr. Elliott suggested an alteration to the effect that correspondents be thus instructed instead of editors, and that memoirs as well as obituaries be embraced in it. He thought correspondents needed caution on this point more than editors, for the latter did not covet these long notices. The editors would willingly carry out the resolution, but unless they were shielded by the General Conference they would be constantly liable to give offence. Such a change would have a happy effect upon the literature of the Church.

Dr. Durbin would amend the resolution to the effect that editors be instructed to confine obituaries and memoirs to the smallest practicable space, and correspondents be also requested to draw them up in the briefest manner possible, simply announcing the facts.

Dr. Bond said that the substitute still left the responsibility with the editors. That would be of no consequence, if no evil resulted to the paper. The editors were willing to take the responsibility so far as they were personally concerned, but if they gave offence it was not the editors who suffered, but the papers. If the conference wished to carry out their purpose, they must definitely prescribe the limits to which obituaries were to be extended. They might make an exception in favour of memoirs, but the evil would remain; for it would be impossible for the editors to induce the preachers to make the distinction. Dr. B. then described the particularity with which the obituaries were written, and said he could easily understand how the preachers were drawn into this minuteness. They were applied to by the family of the deceased to write the account, and they naturally enough felt an interest in every event connected with the history of their departed friend, and supposed that others would feel the same. The preacher was disposed to gratify them, and thoughtlessly threw the entire responsibility of insertion or rejection on the editor, who must either insert the whole or offend the subscribers who are the friends of the deceased. Two "squares" would be enough for any obituary notice. All that was intended was, that the triumphant death should be recorded for the encouragement of those who were still on their pilgrimage. This was the whole pith of the matter. It was easy to say the person written of was converted at a certain time, and then give his testimony at the time of his death. This was what was intended; not merely to notify to friends at a distance that such a person was dead, but to record the testimony he finally bore to the power and efficacy of religion.

Dr. Peck should vote for the substitute proposed by Dr. Durbin—he thought it would be difficult to make a rule with regard to the length of such notices.

The amendment was then adopted.

A resolution to the effect that all books sent for review to the editors of the conference publications should be preserved by them to be formed into an editor's library, which should be handed over to his successor, was opposed by

Mr. L. M. Lee, on the ground that editors oftentimes treasured upon their own time—time that should be devoted to rest—to review these books. Many also were received that were not fit to be preserved in such a library.

Mr. Slicer spoke in favour of the resolution, which was adopted.

Another resolution had reference to the reorganization of the Book Committee, and to make the revision of works for publication devolve upon the editors, which gave rise to some remarks from Dr. Bangs on the subject of the publication of his *History of Methodism*. The first volume was read to the committee with full explanations of the plan he intended to pursue, and they recommended him to go on with the work, but they did not read the second volume. It had been said the operation of the Book Committee had clogged the action of the agents, and had rendered the Book Concern less profitable than it otherwise might have been. He had been twenty-five years a member of that committee, and had no recollection that the agents ever stopped the press or discharged the workmen for want of books to print. On the other hand, the agents had said they could not publish all the volumes recommended by the committee. Several had not been published to this day. The committee had laboured to promote the prosperity of the Concern.

Mr. Early said, his objections were against the system, and not against the men who formed the committee. He thought that, with the great advantages possessed by the Book Concern, the profits of the establishment ought to be greater. He did not want these profits for the sake of investment, but that they might have greater facilities of imparting religious instructions, and increase the circulation of their books by reducing the prices.

The resolution was adopted.

Dr. Bond reminded the conference that they had omitted to provide for the support of an editor or agent who might be suspended during the interval of the General Conferences, which provision, after some explanation, was said to exist in the resolution.

The report was adopted, and the conference adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5.

Report of the Missionary Committee.

The report of the Missionary Committee was read. The report recommended some alterations in the constitution of the Missionary Society.

Art. 4, recommended one corresponding secretary instead of three, as heretofore, and proposed in effect to take the power of filling up vacancies, among the various offices, out of the hands of the New-York Conference, and place it in the hands of the presiding bishop.

Dr. Bond said that the proposed amendment would not effect the object sought. By the constitution of the society every minister who paid two dollars a year was a member of the Missionary Board *ipso facto*, and if such a resolution as that now proposed should pass, the brethren in the neighbourhood could come to the board and carry everything by a mere majority.

Mr. Rice said he did not see how they could deprive life members of their rights without first returning them their money.

Mr. Finley said he could not let this matter pass without giving his views upon it. He thought there was no necessity for any corresponding secretary at all. The office had, for the last four years, been an incubus upon their operations, and especially injurious to the collections, and had cost the society \$20,000. And now he saw in the article before them a provision for two or three more, the secretary being authorized to employ as many as he might find necessary, so that they would have the same thing upon them for four years more. He could not see what such a secretary could have to do except travelling about. If the preachers did their duty, they could make speeches as well, and collect as much money, as the secretary; and the people would give more money if it went to the missionaries instead of the secretaries. They must at least shut the door against an unlimited number of secretaries. There would be two editors, and why could not the assistant editor conduct the missionary correspondence?

Mr. Slicer wished to know what the corresponding secretaries actually cost, and should move that the resolution lie on the table until that information was given.

Mr. Ames said he was glad that the conference wished to look minutely into the expenditure connected with their institutions and officers. Every officer should be held to strict account for all his doings. It had been a matter of regret to him that their officers were held to a slighter responsibility than those of any other section of the Christian Church. And this laxity of discipline extended through their whole system of missionary operations. They were without checks and balances, and relied implicitly on the mere auditing of accounts. He begged at this opportunity to make a few remarks on the subject of corresponding secretaries; and would, if the conference permitted him, read a communication in reference to himself in connection with the office. The gentleman then read a letter of resignation, which he had prepared three years ago, but was dissuaded from presenting it at his annual conference, by the advice of Bishop Roberts and other friends. The communication assigned several reasons why the writer thought his office and its expenditures unnecessary, and by some statistics showed that the increase to the funds was not an equivalent. The reverend gentleman adverted to several grants which by negotiation he had obtained from the government, for the prosecution of Indian and other missions—mentioned the salary allowed him while in the office—that while fulfilling its duties he had travelled unattended and alone thousands of miles, in parts of the country where military men alone had ventured, and that well attended and well armed. Yet he had done nothing more than was required by the spirit of Methodist itinerancy, and had only acted as an honest man in the discharge of the duties the Church had confided to him, and he had done good to the Church by obtaining help from the government in the establishment of schools and missions. He should not have said so much had it not been for the reports prevalent respecting the office of corresponding secretary.

Mr. Finley's motion for the duties to be performed by the assistant editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal* was laid on the table.

It was then reported that the whole expenses of the three corresponding secretaries, for the four years past, had been upward of \$20,000, including travelling expenses.

Dr. Bangs said, that for the four years he held the office he was sometimes absent for a month at a time. Letters would sometimes arrive during that absence, and he got a friend to open them, and publish such as he thought fit for publication. This assistance was given without compensation. He hoped they would not cramp their officers unnecessarily. The expense should not be the only consideration. He was in favour of the strictest economy; but he begged them not to destroy an efficient officer, merely because they had to pay him a salary. Take the salaries of travelling preachers in the aggregate for four years, and the amount would appear

very large. The same with the bishops. But would they dispense with them because of that? The six bishops had cost for the four years about \$15,000. He knew something about the labours of the secretary's office. He had performed its duties for sixteen years, and never received one cent, and he had done it with great pleasure. By means of this society whole conferences had been raised up, towns and villages cultivated, and brought into connection with Methodism. He begged the conference not to take any measures that would cramp this portion of their work. Whence arose this jealousy? What had the New-York Conference done to forfeit the confidence of the General Conference? Had they betrayed their trust in any way? Then pray remove the responsibility to some other conference, but do not destroy officers that are necessary to carry on the work.

Mr. Ames said, the Methodist Episcopal Church Missionary Society paid 5 per cent for the collection of their funds, whereas other Churches were paying 8 per cent. The money subscribed to that society had gone more directly to the object for which it was subscribed, than was the case in any other society whatever.

Dr. Capers wished to say a few words in reference to himself as one of the secretaries. He did not like speaking of himself; but he would just say, that during the last four years he had not been able to do much in his duties, not having been able to travel about. He never was more anxious during his life to fulfil his duties, and he had some encouragement to hope that he had not been an unprofitable labourer. He had brought sums annually into the treasury, varying from \$4,000 to \$11,000. He took not this to himself any more than he did all the good that had been done by the Missionary Society; but he had thought it necessary to make some explanation.

The resolution was adopted.

Mr. Collins moved to strike out of section six the word "official," and insert "honorary."

Dr. Bangs doubted whether this could be done constitutionally. The right of being official members was given by the constitution on certain conditions, which conditions having been complied with, he thought gave an inalienable right to the privilege. They might, by this measure, strike a blow at the missionary cause which it might not recover for years.

Mr. Early thought if the necessity existed for the change it should be mooted by the board of managers, and their not doing so was a virtual admission, and indeed conclusive testimony, that the privilege had not been abused.

The amendment did not prevail.

Dr. Bangs offered a new article, to take the place of Article 13, which he wished to recommend to the board of managers. The conference would understand that it had been the custom of the board of managers, at the commencement of the year, to make an appropriation in the aggregate of \$40,000 for the use of domestic missions, which the bishops were authorized to draw during the year. The board of managers could not apportion this to the several annual conferences, as they did not know where most of the missions were. And in the distribution of this sum the bishops necessarily interfered with each other; and not knowing what each other had drawn, it sometimes occurred that they drew out all the funds before they had completed their visitations, for want of the amount being properly divided among the several annual conferences. He proposed that the general missionary committee should be composed of members from different parts of the work, from the bounds of the several annual conferences, so that they should be able to apportion to each district its proper amount. There had been no such board constituted that he knew of. This would give to the board of managers a discretionary power, but they would have the additional information of this general committee. The expense of their assembling would probably be one hundred dollars; but as they would come from different parts, and all be missionary men, they would bring a large addition of knowledge and information to the board of managers.

That part of the report was recommitted for the purpose of introducing such an article.

The second part of the report was then taken up, which had reference to some plan for raising increased funds for the missionary cause. The committee reported that they had not been able to agree upon any plan of general application.

Bishop Soule said he had indulged the hope that the General Conference would have fixed upon some disciplinary plan of finance, which could have been carried out in all the departments of the work, for the purpose of securing sufficient funds for carrying on their great missionary enterprises. There was nothing growing

out of the recommendations of the report which did not leave the annual conferences and the Church itself as much out at sea as they were before. He could not perceive that there could be any permanent success in their finances unless they had a defined, fixed, uniform plan, which should go out under the recommendation of that General Conference. Without such a plan every annual conference would have its own system and plan of operation, and they should be just where they were before. The address submitted by the superintendents to the General Conference did not settle upon any plan, but it did settle upon a great principle. It would be seen by any financier who would look at the report, that the suggestion had not been carried out.

Dr. Bangs said that several plans had been before the committee, but they could not agree respecting any one of them.

Dr. Capers suggested the recommitment of the report.

Mr. Green believed they never could agree. They could not get a quorum together. The present committee was too numerous for the purposes of business.

Mr. J. T. Peck had no objection, with one understanding. They could not do anything effectually, unless the conference would allow them time to do it in, and then take time to read and pass their report.

Dr. Bangs thought it was not in the power of any committee to devise a plan that would be generally acceptable.

Dr. Capers thought it might easily be done. There were one or two members of the committee who pressed their peculiar opinions too pertinaciously. He recommended the appointment of a judicious committee of five for the purpose, which was adopted.

Resolution on the Number of Bishops.

Mr. Cartwright moved the following resolution:—

“Resolved, That the Committee on Episcopacy be instructed to report the number of bishops, if any, that are to be elected, and that the conference proceed to the election of its officers to-morrow morning.” He had no solicitude about the matter, beyond the fact that it was necessary that they draw these important matters to a close. They must have these questions settled and fixed. They were on the eve of an adjournment, and it behooved them to get through the business as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. G. F. Pierce said, that in addition to other objections against the resolution was the difficulty still existing in Bishop Andrew's case. The episcopacy, or the Committee on Episcopacy, must define his position before they could say how many bishops were to be elected; and the nature of the resolution passed by that conference, in his case, must first be settled.

Dr. Paine said that it was important for the committee to know what relation Bishop Andrew now stood in. The episcopacy had recommended six efficient men as the requisite strength of the superintendency, and he did not see how they could do anything until that point was settled.

The conference then adjourned.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Declaration of the Southern Members.

Mr. Longstreet presented the following document:—

“The delegates of the conferences in the slaveholding states take leave to *declare* to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that the continued agitation on the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the Church,—the frequent action on that subject in the General Conference,—and especially the extra-judicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew, which resulted, on Saturday last, in the virtual suspension of him from his office as superintendent,—must produce a state of things in the south which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General Conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states.

“*Virginia Conference.*—John Early, W. A. Smith, Thomas Crowder, Leroy M. Lee.

“*Kentucky.*—H. B. Bascom, William Gunn, H. H. Kavanaugh, Edward Stevenson, B. T. Crouch, G. W. Brush.

“*Missouri.*—W. W. Redman, William Patton, J. C. Berryman, J. M. Jameson.

“*Holston.*—E. F. Sevier, S. Patton, Thomas Stringfield.

"Georgia.—G. F. Pierce, William J. Parks, L. Pierce, J. W. Glenn, J. L. Evans, A. B. Longstreet.

"North Carolina.—James Jamieson, Peter Doub, B. T. Blake.

"Illinois.—J. Stamper.

"Memphis.—G. W. D. Harris, Wm. M'Mahan, Thomas Joyner, S. S. Moody.

"Arkansas.—John C. Parker, William P. Radcliffe, Andrew Hunter.

"Mississippi.—William Winans, B. M. Drake, John Lane, G. M. Rogers.

"Texas.—Littleton Fowler.

"Alabama.—Jesse Boring, Jefferson Hamilton, W. Murrah, G. Garret.

"Tennessee.—Robert Paine, John B. M'Ferrin, A. L. P. Green, T. Maddin.

"South Carolina.—W. Capers, William M. Wightman, Charles Betts, S. Dunwoody, H. A. C. Walker."

Dr. Elliott said he thought the best present disposition of that document would be to refer it to a committee of nine.

Mr. Sandford said he had some objections to that motion in the present form of the communication just read. It alleged what he presumed the General Conference would not admit, that there had been extra-judicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew. For one he denied that that was the fact and he supposed a majority of the conference would coincide in that view of the matter, and he did not see how they could allow a paper to come under their action which alleged that which they did not believe to be true. He was aware that during the discussion speakers on the other side had said this was the case, but it was expressly disavowed on the floor of that conference; and he knew that the member who had presented the document now before them had said, just before the vote was taken, that unless he heard some expression to the contrary, he should take the meaning attached to it by the friend of the mover as its proper meaning. He (Mr. S.) heard no response in contradiction to the construction thus put upon the resolution. How then could it come to pass that men who heard this avowal could now come forward and say that this conference had been guilty of an extra-judicial act? To him the course taken appeared as a direct insult to that body, and such as they should not yield to. Let those who had presented this paper make a communication according to existing and acknowledged facts, but not asserting what the General Conference denied to be true. If they thought the proposed course necessary, let them say so without adding insult thereto, and the conference would hear them, but he could not consent to having such a paper as the present one referred to a committee.

Mr. Longstreet said he believed this was the third speech they had had from that brother on the subject of the sentence, or advice, or counsel, or whatever name they choose to give the action on Saturday against the bishop, and had hoped that in some one of those speeches he would have told them how he did understand that action. He (Mr. L.) had striven to get at it in vain. When he rose some days ago to address the conference, he remarked that there was some ambiguity in the form of the resolution, but that the plain import of its language was, when taken in connection with the facts, *mandatory*—imperative was his word—and that he should thus understand it unless he was corrected by somebody. Nobody did correct him, nor did he hear, until Dr. Durbin got up, from the lips of any one that he had misinterpreted the resolution. After that explanation he (Mr. L.) said then, unless he was corrected he should understand it as so explained, and nobody objected, so he was at liberty to understand it either way! He could not have conceived that that conference could have taken a position so strictly ambiguous. When an explanatory resolution on the subject was introduced the other day, Mr. Sandford rose and said, that he thought it very plain, but he never told us how he viewed it. The vote of this conference against the south was then both mandatory and advisory. Will any one dispute that? [No answer.] Well, now, it is not disputed! Will that brother tell us how he understood it? Then it appears to me we are thrown back upon its plain legitimate terms, which, in connection with the facts, make it mandatory upon the bishop. Why? Because you substituted it for the request, and changed the terms to "it is the sense of this conference," &c. What was the use of the substitute unless it was the design of this conference, which he could not believe, to have two or three positions on which each man could take his stand to explain his views. Then, he should maintain, it was a sentence; and did their saying so insult the conference? Now, a judicial sentence is one in which the tribunal having cognizance of the case pronounces its judgment after due forms of law, on the finding of a court or jury, after

hearing all the circumstances of the case. But had there been one single sentence in this whole proceeding which partakes of a judicial proceeding? Certainly not. Then the resolution was the sense of the house expressed extra-judicially.

Nothing (said Mr. L.) could have been further from our intention than to offer an insult to this body. We have now the calmness of despair. This has been thrown out as an olive branch of peace. It is hoped that we can now meet on some common ground, for the thing is done, and the mischief is accomplished, and now we are in a situation to come together, and viewing the wreck, see what we can save from it. We express our opinion that it is no longer desirable that this conference should have jurisdiction. This continual harassing us on a subject from which we cannot escape, only brings us to quarrel with each other. Now the question is, whether we cannot meet with something that will harmonize us all. Let me relieve the persons who present that paper from any intention to insult or cast fire-brands into this conference. The word objected to is so commonly used with reference to the recent action of this conference that it has become a household word with us, and I regret that that brother should so generally take these verbal exceptions, and should exhibit this morbid sensibility about mere words. I regret that he has not more charity than to suppose that the fifty-two should design to insult the one hundred and twenty-eight.

Mr. Sandford explained, that he did not attribute design in the matter.

Mr. Longstreet. Then it is an insult, which the fifty-two had not capacity to discover. At the request of the President, Mr. Longstreet further defined and illustrated what he conceived to be meant by a judicial act. A man must be brought to the judgment of a court of some kind, according to the forms of law necessary to bring him within the range of the judge's power, when by due form he is put upon his trial, and the jury or court, having heard him, sentence is passed upon him, and such sentence I take to be a judicial sentence. But if brought up without any precept having been directed to him setting forth the accusation; and if, without examination of witnesses, he is made to testify against himself and out of that testimony are extracted the charges against him, the prosecutors being the parties against whom the alleged offence has been committed, the prosecutors trying him, and pronouncing sentence without forms of law, and without examining witnesses, then it is truly and properly an extra-judicial act.

Dr. Olin said, his object was merely to speak to the point on which Mr. Longstreet had expressed himself. He had several times been addressed on the subject as having taken part in explaining the resolution of Saturday. He wished not to utter a word that should wound any one's feelings, nor did he mean to express any one's opinion but his own. He was surprised the other day, when brethren who voted against a resolution, brought in another resolution to define its meaning, by acting on which it seemed to him they should be placed in difficulties. They had used language which to him had appeared unambiguous; and yet if a hundred men were asked how they understood those words, they might put a different construction upon them, so difficult was it to define distinctly the meaning of terms unless drawn up in a legal form, or unless it was some peculiar technicality of language to which proverbial use had assigned a definite and distinct meaning. Different minds might take different views without any intention of trickery, or of coming by indirection to that which they could not reach by direct means. He (Dr. O.) had said prior to his vote in the case of Bishop Andrew, that if that resolution were at all to be considered as judicial or punitive, or if it were even so much as a censure, from which he thought himself bound to refrain, he would not support, but would oppose the resolution. He thought, however, that the conference had power over a bishop, something like that which a bishop had over a preacher. Thus, if a preacher placed in the south, who was otherwise a true and good man, were to become a violent abolitionist, and excite the whole country against himself, the bishop would have power to remove such a man, and would be expected to exercise that power. Now he was aware there had been some doubt as to whether the conference had the power to act as they did; and he thought they had only put forth a prudential power to remove or prevent an evil; and if in doing so they had pressed hard upon an individual, they did not mean to say that he was criminal, they only sought to remove the evil, and to save the Church. This he (Dr. O.) conceived he was doing by his vote on Saturday. He never supposed the proceeding was judicial or punitive, but that it was only the putting forth of a power conceded on all hands as incidental to the General Conference, and arising out of its relation to the episcopacy, and which had always been plead

when their enemies spoke of the great power of the episcopacy; and he considered that Bishop Andrew was not punished, was not tried; that the conference did not depose him, nor in the legal meaning, or consequences of the terms employed in that resolution did he consider that the bishop was in any way disqualified from performing the functions of his office. His acts now would not be invalid, though constitutionally he would be liable to appear before the next General Conference, and answer for his conduct. He would embody his sentiments in the form of resolutions, which, however, he would not press upon the conference.

"Resolved, That this conference does not consider its action in the case of Bishop Andrew as either judicial or punitive, but as a prudential regulation for the security and welfare of the Church.

"Resolved, That having made a solemn declaration of what, in their judgment, the safety and peace of the Church require, it is not necessary or proper to express any opinion as to what amount of respect may justly belong to their action in the premises."

He (Dr. Olin) did not mean to affirm or deny the right of the conference to express its opinion, but in what was designed to affect the character of another, they should not do that which it became only a judicial tribunal to do. The act is executive. The functions of the bishop should not be interrupted; that belonged to the power before whom he might hereafter be brought, and who were the proper parties to explain the meaning of this resolution.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6.

Bishop Hedding's Communication.

Bishop Hedding said, he desired to say a few words in relation to himself, and it was always a great cross for him to speak of himself. He referred to a remark made yesterday, by the committee on episcopacy, that they did not know how many effective bishops they had. He desired to say, that if he was rightly informed, to-morrow, if he should live so long, he would be sixty years old, and he had been in the ministry forty-three years and a half. He was admitted on trial in the New-York Conference, in 1801. He travelled the following year a hard circuit. He travelled in several other conferences until 1824. He had never had a day's ill health until 1803. His health had been destroyed by hard work, while in the New-Hampshire Conference. He had always since been labouring under infirmities, which he had never been able to get clear of entirely to this day. He had, nevertheless, taken his part of the work, and had never flinched from the performance of the duties assigned him. The brethren knew that he received the office with reluctance, and it had been a burden to him ever since. In 1828 conference said that he should not be under any obligation to do more work than he was able to do, and in 1836 they confirmed their former actions. He had thought to have resigned his office at this time, but he would not do it now, under the circumstances in which conference was placed, but would leave it to them, or to Providence, to say what was best to be done. His health was good now, but he could not do so much work as formerly. He could get along very well if he could live easy. He was of such a constitution that when he had anything to do, or others thought that he had duties to perform, he could not help attending to them without regard to his health.

Bishop Hedding then gave a most interesting and delightful account of the state of his mind as related to his religious enjoyments. He assured the brethren that he felt a growing confidence in his Redeemer, more abounding joys and consolations from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and that he had unclouded prospects of dwelling with God for ever in his kingdom of everlasting life.

The Protest of the Minority in the Case of Bishop Andrew.

Mr. Early moved that Dr. Bascom have leave to read the Protest of the southern brethren in relation to the action of the conference in the case of Bishop Andrew.

Dr. Bascom read the following

PROTEST.

"In behalf of thirteen annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and portions of the ministry and membership of several other conferences, embracing

nearly five thousand ministers, travelling and local, and a membership of nearly five hundred thousand, constitutionally represented in this General Conference, we the undersigned, a minority of the delegates of the several annual conferences in General Conference assembled, after mature reflection, impelled by convictions we cannot resist, and in conformity with the rights and usages of minorities, in the instance of deliberative assemblies and judicial tribunals, in similar circumstances of division and disagreement, *Do most solemnly, and in due form, protest* against the recent act of a majority of this General Conference, in an attempt, as understood by the minority, to degrade and punish the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by declaring it to be the sense or judgment of the General Conference that he desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions, without the exhibition of any alleged offence against the laws or discipline of the Church, without form of trial, or legal conviction of any kind, and in the absence of any charge of want of qualification or faithfulness in the performance of the duties pertaining to his office.

"We protest against the act of the majority in the case of Bishop Andrew, as extra-judicial to all intents and purposes, being both without law, and contrary to law. We *protest* against the act because we recognize in this General Conference no right, power, or authority, ministerial, judicial, or administrative, to suspend or depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or otherwise subject him to any official disability whatever, without the formal presentation of a charge or charges, alleging that the bishop to be dealt with has been guilty of the violation of some law, or at least some disciplinary obligation of the Church, and also upon conviction of such charge after due form of trial. We *protest* against the act in question as a violation of the fundamental law, usually known as the compromise law of the Church, on the subject of slavery—the only law which can be brought to bear upon the case of Bishop Andrew, and the assertion and maintenance of which, until it is constitutionally revoked, is guaranteed by the honour and good faith of this body, as the representative assembly of the thirty-three annual conferences known as contracting parties in the premises.

"And we *protest* against the act further, as an attempt to establish a dangerous precedent, subversive of the union and stability of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and especially as placing in jeopardy the general superintendency of the Church, by subjecting any bishop of the Church at any time to the will and caprice of a majority of the General Conference, not only without law, but in defiance of the restraints and provisions of law. The undersigned, a minority of the General Conference, in *protesting*, as they do, against the late act of the majority, in the virtual suspension of Bishop Andrew, regard it as due to themselves and those they represent, as well as to the character and interests of the Church at large, to declare, by solemn and formal avowal, that after a careful examination of the entire subject, in all its relations and bearings, they protest as above, for the reasons and upon the grounds following, viz., 1st. The proceeding against Bishop Andrew in this General Conference has been upon the assumption that he is connected with slavery—that he is the legal holder and owner of slave property. On the subject of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church, both as it regards the ministry and membership, we have special law, upon which the adjudication of all questions of slavery must, by intention of law, proceed. The case of Bishop Andrew, therefore, presents a simple question of law and fact, and the undersigned cannot consent that the force of circumstances and other merely extrinsic considerations shall be allowed to lead to any issue, except that indicated by the law and the facts in the case. In the late act of the majority, law, express law, is appealed from, and expediency in view of circumstances—relative propriety—assumed necessity, is substituted in its place as a rule of judgment. It is assumed, and the assumption acted upon, that expediency may have jurisdiction even in the presence of law—the law, too, being special, and covering the case, in terms. In the absence of law, it might be competent for the General Conference to act upon other grounds; this is not disputed, nor yet that it would have been competent for the conference to proceed upon the forms of law—but that the terms and conditions of a special enactment, having all the force of a common public charter, can be rightfully waived in practice, at the promptings of a fugitive unsettled expediency, is a position the undersigned regard not merely as erroneous, but as fraught with danger to the best interests of the Church.

"The law of the Church on slavery has always existed since 1785, but especially since 1804, and in view of the adjustment of the whole subject, in 1816, as a *virtual, though informal, contract of mutual concession and forbearance*, between

the north and the south, then, as now, known and existing as distinct parties, in relation to the vexed questions of slavery and abolition. Those conferences found in states where slavery prevailed constituting the southern party, and those in the non-slaveholding states the northern, exceptions to the rule being found in both. The rights of the legal owners of slaves, in all the slaveholding states, are guaranteed by the constitution of the United States, and by the local constitutions of the states respectively, as the supreme law of the land, to which every minister and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the limits of the United States' government professes subjection, and pledges himself to submit, as an article of Christian faith, in the common creed of the Church. Domestic slavery, therefore, wherever it exists in this country, is a civil regulation, existing under the highest sanctions of constitutional and municipal law known to the tribunals of the country, and it has always been assumed at the south, and relied upon as correct, that the north or non-slaveholding states had no right, civil or moral, to interfere with relations and interests thus secured to the people of the south by all the graver forms of law and social order, and that it cannot be done without an abuse of the constitutional rights of citizenship. The people of the north, however, have claimed to think differently, and have uniformly acted toward the south in accordance with such opposition of opinion. Precisely in accordance, too, with this state of things, as it regards the general population of the north and south, respectively, the Methodist Episcopal Church has been divided in opinion and feeling on the subject of slavery and abolition since its organization in 1784: two separate and distinct parties have always existed. The southern conferences, in agreeing to the main principles of the compromise law in 1804 and 1816, conceded by express stipulation their right to resist northern interference in any form, upon the condition, pledged by the north, that while the *whole Church*, by common consent, united in proper effort for the mitigation and final removal of the evil of slavery, the north was not to interfere, by excluding from membership or ministerial office in the Church, persons owning and holding slaves in states where emancipation is not practicable, and where the liberated slave is not permitted to enjoy freedom. Such was the compact of 1804 and 1816, finally agreed to by the parties after a long and fearful struggle, and such is the compact now—the proof being derived from history and the testimony of living witnesses. And is it possible to suppose that the original purpose and intended application of the law was not designed to embrace every member, minister, order, and officer of the Methodist Episcopal Church? Is the idea of excepted cases allowable by fair construction of the law? Do not the reasons and intentment of the law place it beyond doubt, that every conceivable case of alleged misconduct that can arise, connected with slavery or abolition, is to be subjected by consent and contract of parties to the jurisdiction of this great conservative arrangement?

Is there anything in the law or its reasons creating an exception in the instance of bishops? Would the south have entered into the arrangement, or in any form consented to the law, had it been intimated by the north that bishops must be an exception to the rule? Are the virtuous dead of the north to be slandered by the supposition that they intended to except bishops, and thus accomplished their purposes, in negotiation with the south, by a resort to deceptive and dishonourable means? If bishops are not named, no more are presiding elders, agents, editors—or, indeed, any other officers of the Church, who are nevertheless included, although the same rule of construction would except them also. The enactment was for an entire people, east, west, north, and south. It was for the Church, and every member of it—for the common weal of the body—and is, therefore, universal and unrestricted in its application; and no possible case can be settled upon any other principles, without a direct violation of this law both in fact and form. The law being what we have assumed, any violation of it, whatever may be its form or mode, is as certainly a breach of good faith as an infringement of law. It must be seen, from the manner in which the compromise was effected, in the shape of a law, agreed to by equal contracting parties, "the several annual conferences," after long and formal negotiation, that it was not a mere legislative enactment, a simple decree of a General Conference, but partakes of the nature of a grave compact, and is invested with all the sacredness and sanctions of a solemn treaty, binding respectively the well-known parties to its terms and stipulations. If this be so,—and with the evidence accessible who can doubt it?—if this be so, will it prove a light matter for this General Conference to violate or disregard the obligation of this *legal compromise*, in the shape of public recognized law? Allow that the present parties

in this controversy cannot be brought to view the subject of the law in question in the same light, can such a matter end in a mere difference of opinion, as it respects the immediate parties? The law exists in the Discipline of the Church. The law is known, and its reasons are known, as equally binding upon both parties, and what is the likelihood of the imputation of bad faith under the circumstances? What the hazard that such imputation, as the decision of public opinion, it may be from a thousand tribunals, will be brought to bear, with all the light and force of conviction, upon any act of this body, in violation of the plain provisions of long-established law, originating in treaty, and based upon the principles of *conventional compromise*?

In proportion to our love of truth, of law, and order, are we not called upon to pause and weigh well the hazard, before, as a General Conference, we incur it beyond change or remedy? The undersigned have long looked to the great *conservative law* of the Discipline, on the subject of slavery and abolition, as the only charter of *connectional union* between the north and the south; and whenever this bond of connection is rendered null and void, no matter in what form, or by what means, they are compelled to regard the Church, to every practical purpose, as already divided, without the intervention of any other agency. By how far, therefore, they look upon the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church as essential to its prosperity, and the glory and success of American Methodism, by so far they are bound to *protest* against the late act of the General Conference, in the irregular suspension of Bishop Andrew, as not only without law, but in direct contravention of legal stipulations known to be essential to the unity of the Church. And they are thus explicit in a statement of facts, that the responsibility of division may attach where, in justice, it belongs. The minority, making this protest, are perfectly satisfied with the law of the Church affecting slavery and abolition. They ask no change. They need—they seek no indulgence in behalf of the south. Had Bishop Andrew been suspended according to law, after due form of trial, they would have submitted without remonstrance, as the friends of law and order.

They except and protest, further, against the lawless procedure, as they think, in the case of Bishop Andrew, because, apart from the injustice done him and the south by the act, other and graver difficulties, necessarily incidental to this movement, come in for a share of attention. The whole subject is, in the very nature of things, resolved into a single original question: Will the General Conference adhere to, and in good faith assert and maintain, the compromise law of the Church on the vexed question dividing us, or will it be found expedient generally, as in the case of Bishop Andrew, to lay it aside and tread it under foot? No question on the subject of slavery and abolition can be settled until the General Conference shall settle *this* beyond the possibility of evasion. In the present crisis, it is the opinion of the undersigned that every bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and every member of this General Conference, is especially called upon, by all the responsibilities of truth and honour, to declare himself upon the subject; and they deem it proper, respectfully and urgently, to make such call a part of this protest. When so much depends upon it, can the General Conference, as the organ of the supreme authority of the Church, remain silent without incurring the charge of trifling both with its interests and reputation? Law always pledges the public faith of the body ostensibly governed by it to the faithful assertion and performance of its stipulations; and the compromise law of the Discipline, partaking, as it does, of the nature of the law of treaty, and embracing, as has been seen, all possible cases, pledges the good faith of every minister and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church against saying or doing anything tending to annul the force or thwart the purposes of its enactment. The only allowable remedy of those who object to the law is to seek a constitutional change of the law, and in failure, to submit, or else retire from the Church. All attempts to resist, evade, or defeat the objects and intended application of the law, until duly revoked, must be regarded as unjust and revolutionary, because an invasion of well-defined conventional right. And the undersigned except to the course of the majority, in the informal prosecution of Bishop Andrew and the anomalous quasi suspension it inflicts, as not only giving to the compromise a construction rendering it entirely ineffective, but as being directly subversive of the great bond of union which has held the north and south together for the last forty years. Turning to the confederating annual conferences of 1804, and the vexed and protracted negotiations which preceded the General Conference of that year, and finally resulted in the existing law of the Discipline, regulating the whole subject, and glancing at nearly half a million of Methodists, now in the south, who have

come into the Church with all their hopes and fears, interests and associations, their property, character, and influence, reposing in safety upon the publicly-plighted faith of the Methodist Episcopal Church, only to be told that this is all a dream, that a part of what was pledged was never intended to be allowed, and that the whole is at all times subject to the discretion of a dominant majority, claiming, in matter of right, to be without and above law, competent not merely to make all rules and regulations for the proper government of the Church, but to govern the Church without rule or regulation, and punish and degrade without even the alleged infringement of law, or the form of trial, if it be thought expedient, presents a state of things filling the undersigned with alarm and dismay. Such views and facts, without adducing others, will perhaps be sufficient to show the first and principal ground occupied by the minority in the protest. They cannot resist the conviction that the majority have failed to redeem the pledge of public law given to the Church and the world by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

2d. The undersigned are aware that it is affirmed by some of the majority, but meanwhile denied by others, and thus a mooted, unsettled question among themselves, that the resolution censuring and virtually suspending Bishop Andrew, as understood by the minority, is mere matter of advice or recommendation; but, so far from advising or recommending anything, the language of the resolution, by fair and necessary construction, is imperative and mandatory in form, and, unqualified by anything in the resolution itself, or in the preamble explaining it, conveys the idea plainly and most explicitly, that it is the judgment and will of the conference that Bishop Andrew shall cease to exercise the office of bishop until he shall cease to be the owner of slaves. "Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference that he desist." That is, having rendered himself unacceptable to the majority, it is their judgment that he retire from the bench of bishops, and their field of action.

No idea of request, advice, or recommendation is conveyed by the language of the preamble or resolution; and the recent avowal of an intention to advise is, in the judgment of the undersigned, disowned by the very terms in which, it is said, the *advice* was given. The whole argument of the majority, during a debate of twelve days, turned upon the right of the conference to displace Bishop Andrew without resort to formal trial. No one questioned the legal right of the conference to advise; and if this only was intended, why the protracted debate upon the subject? But further, a resolution, respectfully and affectionately requesting the bishop to resign, had been laid aside, to entertain the substitute under notice; a motion, too, to declare the resolution advisory, was promptly rejected by the majority; and in view of all these facts, and the *entire* proceedings of the majority in the case, the undersigned have been compelled to consider the resolution as a mandatory judgment, to the effect that Bishop Andrew desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions. If the majority have been misunderstood, the language of their own resolution, and the position they occupied in debate, have led to the misconception; and truth and honour, not less than a most unfortunate use of language, require that they explain themselves.

3d. We except to the act of the majority, because it is assumed that conscience and principle are involved, and require the act complained of, as expedient and necessary under the circumstances. Bishop A. being protected by the law of the Church having cognizance of all offences connected with slavery, such connection in his case, in the judgment of all jurisprudence, can only be wrong in the proportion that the law is bad and defective. It is not conceived by the minority, how conscience and principle can be brought to bear upon Bishop A., and not upon the *law*, and the *Church* having such law. They are obliged to believe that the law and the source from which it emanates ~~must~~ become the object of exception and censure before Bishop A., who has not offended against either, unless the Church is against the law, can be subjected to trial, at the bar of the conscience and principles of men who profess subjection and approval, in the instance both of the law and the Church.

The undersigned can never consent, while we have a plain law, obviously covering an assumed offence, that the offence shall be taken, under plea of principle, out of the hands of the law, and be resubjected to the conflicting opinions and passions which originally led to a resort to law, as the only safe standard of judgment. They do not understand how conscience and principle can attach grave blame to action not disapproved by the law—express law too, made and provided in the case—without extending condemnation to the law itself, and the body from which it proceeds. The Church can hardly be supposed to have settled policy and invariable custom,

in contravention of law; the avowal of such custom and policy therefore, excluding from the episcopacy any and every man, in any way connected with slavery, is mere *assumption*. No contract, agreement, decree or purpose of this kind, is on record, or ever existed. No such exaction, in terms or by implication, was ever made by the north, or conceded by the south. No conventional understanding ever existed to this effect, so far as the south is concerned, or has been informed. That it has long, perhaps always been the purpose of the north, not to elect a slaveholder to the office of bishop is admitted. But as no law gave countenance to anything of the kind, the south regarded it as a mere matter of social injustice, and was not disposed to complain. The north has always found its security in numbers, and the untrammelled right of suffrage, and to this the south has not objected. The assumption, however, is entirely different, and is not admitted by the south, but is plainly negatived by the law and language of the Discipline, as explained by authority of the General Conference.

No such concession, beyond peaceable submission to the right of suffrage, exercised by the majority, will ever be submitted to by the south, as it would amount to denial of equal abstract right, and a disfranchisement of the southern ministry, and could not be submitted to without injury and degradation. If, then, the north is not satisfied with the negative right conceded to the south by law in this matter, the minority would be glad to know what *principle* or *policy* is likely to introduce beyond the existing provisions of law. As the contingency which has occasioned the difficulty in the case of Bishop Andrew, and to which every southern minister is liable at any time, does not and cannot fall under *condemnation* of existing law, and he cannot be punished, nor yet subjected to any official disability, without an abuse of both right and power, on the part of this General Conference, the minority are compelled to think that the majority ought to be satisfied with the consciousness and declaration, that they are in no way responsible for the contingency, and thus, at least, allow Bishop Andrew the benefit of their own legislation, until they see proper to change it. This attempt by the majority to protect a lawless prosecution from merited rebuke, by an appeal to conscience and principle, condemning Bishop Andrew, while the law and the Church, shielding him from the assault, are not objected to, is looked upon by the minority as a species of moral, we will not say legal, casuistry, utterly subversive of all the principles of order and good government.

4th. The act of the majority was ostensibly resorted to because, as alleged, the Church in the middle and northern conferences will not submit to any, the slightest connection with slavery. But if connection with slavery is ruinous to the Church in the north, that ruin is already wrought. Who does not know that the very Discipline, laws, and legislation of the Church necessarily connect us all with slavery? All our provisional legislation on the subject has proceeded on the assumption that slavery is an element of society—a principle of action—a household reality in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. It is part and parcel of the economy of American Methodism, in every subjective sense. It has given birth to law and right, conventional arrangements, numerous missions, and official trusts. Every bishop, every minister, every member of the Church is of necessity connected with slavery. Each is brother and co-member, both with slave and master, by the very laws and organization of the Church.

If, then, connection with slavery is so disastrous, the only remedy is to purify the Church by reorganization, or get out of it as soon as possible. And would not this aversion to slavery—would not conscience and principle, so much plead in this controversy—appear much more consistent in every view of the subject, in striking at the root of the evil, in the organic structure of the Church, than in seeking its personification in Bishop Andrew, protected although he be by the law, and proceeding to punish him, by way of calling off attention from the known toleration of the same thing, in other aspects and relations?

Impelled by conscience and principle to the illegal arrest of a bishop, because he has incidentally, by bequest, inheritance, and marriage, come into possession of slave property, in no instance intending to possess himself of such property, how long will conscience and principle leave other ministers, or even lay members, undisturbed, who may happen to be in the same category with Bishop Andrew? Will assurances be given that the lawlessness of expediency, controlled, as in such case it must be, by prejudice and passion, will extend no further—that there shall be no further curtailment of right as it regards the southern ministry? Yet what is the security of the south in the case? Is the public faith of this body, as instanced in the recent violations of the compromise law, to be relied upon as the guarantee for

the redemption of the pledge? What would such pledge or assurance be but to remind the south that any departure at all from the great conservative pledge of law, to which we appeal, was much more effectually guarded against originally, than it is possible to guard against any subsequent infringement, and to make the south feel further that disappointment in the first instance must compel distrust with regard to the future? The Church having specific law on the subject, all questions involving slavery must inevitably, by intention of law, come within the purview of such special provision, and cannot be judged of by any other law or standard, without a most daring departure from all the rules and sobrieties of judicial procedure, and the undersigned accordingly except to the action of the majority in relation to Bishop Andrew, as not only without sanction of law, but in conflict with rights created by law.

5th. As the Methodist Episcopal Church is now organized, and according to its organization since 1784, the episcopacy is a co-ordinate branch, the executive department proper of the government. A bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is not a mere creature—is in no prominent sense an officer—of the General Conference. The General Conference, as such, cannot constitute a bishop. It is true the annual conferences select the bishops of the Church by the suffrage of their delegates, in General Conference assembled, but the General Conference, in its capacity of a representative body or any other in which it exists, does not possess the power of ordination, without which a bishop cannot be constituted.

The bishops are beyond an integral constituent part of the General Conference, made such by law and the constitution; and because elected by the General Conference, it does not follow that they are subject to the will of that body, except in conformity with legal right and the provisions of law, in the premises. In this sense, and so viewed, they are subject to the General Conference, and this is sufficient limitation of their power, unless the government itself is to be considered irregular and unbalanced in the co-ordinate relations of its parts. In a sense by no means unimportant the General Conference is as much the creature of the episcopacy, as the bishops are the creatures of the General Conference. Constitutionally the bishops alone have the right to fix the time of holding the annual conferences, and should they refuse or neglect to do so, no annual conference could meet according to law, and, by consequence, no delegates could be chosen, and no General Conference could be chosen, or even exist. And because this is so, what would be thought of the impertinent pretension, should the episcopacy claim that the General Conference is the mere creature of their will? As *executive officers* as well as *pastoral overseers*, the bishops belong to the Church as such, and not to the General Conference as one of its counsels or organs of action merely.

The General Conference is in no sense the Church, not even representatively. It is merely the representative organ of the Church, with limited powers to do its business, in the discharge of a delegated trust.

Because bishops are in part constituted by the General Conference, the power of removal does not follow. Episcopacy even in the Methodist Church is not a mere appointment to labour. It is an official consecrated station under the protection of law, and can only be dangerous as the law is bad or the Church corrupt. The power to appoint does not necessarily involve the power to remove; and when the appointing power is derivative, as in the case of the General Conference, the power of removal does not accrue at all, unless by consent of the co-ordinate branches of the government, expressed by law, made and provided in the case. When the legislature of a state, to appeal to analogy for illustration, appoints a judge or senator in congress, does the judge or senator thereby become the officer or creature of the legislature, or is he the officer or senatorial representative of the state, of which the legislature is the mere organ? And does the power of removal follow that of appointment? The answer is negative, in both cases, and applies equally to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who, instead of being the officers and creatures of the General Conference, are *de facto* the officers and servants of the Church, chosen by the General Conference, as its organ of action, and no right of removal accrues, except as they fail to accomplish the *aims* of the Church in their appointment, and then only in accordance with the provisions of law. But when a bishop is suspended, or informed that it is the wish or will of the General Conference that he cease to perform the functions of bishop, for doing what the law of the same body allows him to do, and of course without incurring the hazard of punishment, or even blame, then the whole procedure becomes an outrage upon justice, as well as law.

The assumption of power by the General Conference beyond the warrant of law, to which we object, and against which we protest, will lead, if carried into practice, to a direct violation of one of the restrictive rules of the constitution. Suppose it had been the "sense" of this General Conference, when the late communication from the bishops was respectfully submitted to the conference, that such communication was an interference with their rights and duties—an attempt to tamper with the purity and independence, and therefore an outrage upon the claims and dignity of the conference not to be borne with. And proceeding a step further, suppose it had been the "sense" of the conference that they *all* desist from performing the functions of bishops until the "impediment" of such offence had been removed—assume this, (and, so far as mere law is concerned, no law being violated in either case, it was just as likely as the movement against Bishop Andrew,) and had it taken place, what had become of the general superintendency? If a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church may, without law, and at the instance of mere party expediency, be suspended from the exercise of the appropriate functions of his office, for one act, he may for another. Admit this doctrine, and by what tenure do the bishops hold office? One thing is certain, whatever other tenure there may be, they do not hold office *according to law*.

The provisions of law and the faithful performance of duty, upon this theory of official tenure, afford no security. Admit this claim of absolutism, as regards right and power on the part of the General Conference, and the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are slaves, and the men constituting this body their masters and holders. They are in office only at the discretion of a majority of the General Conference, without the restraints or protection of law. Both the law and themselves are liable and likely at any time to be overborne and trampled upon together, as exemplified in the case of Bishop Andrew. If the doctrine against which we protest be admitted, the episcopal office is, at best, but a quadrennial term of service, and the undersigned are compelled to think that the man who would *remain* a bishop, or allow himself to be *made one*, under such circumstances, "desires a good work," and is prepared for *self-sacrifice*, quite beyond the comprehension of ordinary piety.

As it regards Bishop Andrew, if it shall be made to appear that the action in his case was intended only to *advise* and *request* him to desist from his office, it does not in any way affect the real or relative character of the movement. When a body, claiming the right to compel, asks the resignation of an officer, the request is, to all official and moral purposes, *compulsory*, as it loads the officer with disability, and gives notice of assumed unworthiness, if not criminality. The request has all the force of a mandate, inasmuch as the officer is by such request compelled either to resign or remain in office contrary to the known will of the majority. A simple request, therefore, under the circumstances supposed, carries with it all the force of a decree, and is so understood, it is believed, by all the world.

To request Bishop Andrew to resign, therefore, in view of all the facts and relations of the case, was, in the judgment of the minority, to punish and degrade him; and they maintain that the whole movement was without authority of law, is hence of necessity null and void, and, therefore, not binding upon Bishop Andrew, or the minority protesting against it.

6th. We protest against the act of the majority, instructing Bishop Andrew to desist from the exercise of his office, not merely on account of the injustice and evil connecting with the act itself, but because the act must be understood as the exponent of principles and purposes, as it regards the union of the north and south in the Methodist Episcopal Church, well nigh destroying all hope of its perpetuity. The true position of the parties in relation to a long-existing conventional arrangement, on the subject of slavery and abolition, has been fully under notice; and when men of years and wisdom, experience and learning—men of no common weight of character, and with a well-earned aristocracy of Church influence thrown about them—assume and declare, in action as well as debate, that what a plain law of the Church—the only law applicable in the case—sustained and enforced, too, by an explanatory decree of this body, at a previous session—*decides* shall *not* be a disqualification for office of any grade, in the ministry—when such men, the law and decision of the General Conference notwithstanding, are heard declaring that what law provides for and protects nevertheless *always has been* and *always shall be* a disqualification, what further evidence is wanting to show that the *compromise basis of union*, from which the south has never swerved, has been aban-

done both by the northern and middle conferences, with a few exceptions in the latter, and that principles and purposes are entertained by the majority, driving the south to extreme action, in defence both of their rights and reputation? And how far the long train of eventful sequences, attendant upon the threatened result of division, may be traceable to the northern and middle conferences, by the issue thus provoked, is a question to be settled not by us, but by our contemporaries and posterity.

It is matter of history, with regard to the past, and will not be questioned, that now, as formerly, the south is upon the basis of the Discipline, on the subject of slavery. The minority believe it equally certain that this is not true with regard to the north proper especially. In view, then, of the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which party has been, in equity, entitled to the sympathy and protection of the middle or *umpire* conferences? those who, through good and evil report, have kept good faith and adhered to law, or those, whose opinions and purposes have led them to seek a state of things in advance of law, and thus dishonour its forms and sanctions?

7th. In proportion as the minority appreciate and cling to the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they are bound, further, to except to the position of the majority, in this controversy. Allow that Bishop Andrew, without, however, any infringement of law, is, on account of his connection with slavery, unacceptable in the northern conferences. It is equally known to the majority that any bishop of the Church, either violating, or submitting to a violation of the compromise charter of union between the north and the south, without proper and public remonstrance, cannot be acceptable at the south, and need not appear there. By pressing the issue in question, therefore, the majority virtually dissolve the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, because in every constitutional aspect it is sundered by so crippling a co-ordinate branch of it as to destroy the itinerant general superintendency altogether. Whenever it is clearly ascertained that the compromise law of the Church, regulating slavery and abolition, is abandoned, every bishop, each of the venerable and excellent men who now adorn the Church and its councils, ceases to be a general superintendent. The law of union, the principle of gravitation, binding us together, is dissolved, and the general superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church is no more!

8th. The south have not been led thus to protest merely because of the treatment received by Bishop Andrew, or the kindred action of this body in other matters. The abandonment of the compromise—the official refusal by the majority, as we have understood them, to abide the arbitrament of law, is their principal ground of complaint and remonstrance. If the minority have not entirely misunderstood the majority, the abolition and anti-slavery principles of the north will no longer allow them to submit to the law of the Discipline on the general subject of slavery and abolition; and if this be so, if the compromise law be either repealed or allowed to remain a dead letter, *the south cannot submit, and the absolute necessity of division is already dated.* And should the exigent circumstances in which the minority find themselves placed, by the facts and developments alluded to in this remonstrance, render it finally necessary that the southern conferences should have a *separate, independent* existence, it is hoped that the character and services of the minority, together with the numbers and claims of the ministry and membership of the portion of the Church represented by them, not less than similar reasons and considerations on the part of the northern and middle conferences, will suggest the high moral fitness of meeting this great emergency with strong and steady purpose to do justice to all concerned. And it is believed that, approaching the subject in this way, it will be found practicable to devise and adopt such measures and arrangements, present and prospective, as will secure an amicable division of the Church upon the broad principles of right and equity, and destined to result in the common good of the great body of ministers and members found on either side the line of separation.

Signed by the following delegates, viz. :—

Kentucky Conference.—H. B. Bascom, Wm. Gunn, H. H. Kavanaugh, E. Stevenson, B. T. Crouch, G. W. Brush.

Missouri.—W. W. Redman, W. Patten, J. C. Berryman, J. M. Jameson.

Holston.—E. F. Sevier, S. Patten, T. Stringfield.

Tennessee.—R. Paine, J. B. M'Ferrin, A. L. P. Green, T. Madden.

North Carolina.—J. T. Blake, J. Jameson, P. Doub.

Ohio.—E. W. Sehon.

Memphis.—G. W. D. Harris, S. S. Moody, W. M'Mahon, T. Joyner.

Arkansas.—J. C. Parker, W. P. Ratcliffe, A. Hunter.

Virginia.—J. Early, T. Crowder, W. A. Smith, L. M. Lee.

Mississippi.—W. Winans, B. M. Drake, J. Lane, G. M. Rogers.

Philadelphia.—I. T. Cooper, W. Cooper, T. I. Thompson, Henry White.

Texas.—L. Fowler.

Illinois.—N. C. Berryman, J. Stamper.

Alabama.—J. Boring, J. Hamilton, W. Murrah, G. Garrett.

Georgia.—G. F. Pierce, W. J. Parks, L. Pierce, J. W. Glenn, J. E. Evans, A. B. Longstreet.

South Carolina.—W. Capers, W. M. Wightman, C. Betts, S. Dunwoody, H. A.

C. Walker.

New-Jersey.—T. Sovereign, T. Neal.

New-York, June 6, 1844.

Mr. Simpson offered a resolution to the following effect: That while they could not admit the statements put forth in the Protest, yet, as a matter of courtesy, they would allow it to be placed on the journal; and that a committee, consisting of Messrs. Durbin, Olin, and Hamline, be appointed to make a true statement of the case, to be entered on the journal.

Dr. Winans objected to the word "courtesy." The minority asked no courtesy at the hands of the majority. They demanded it as a right. The chair decided that the first part of the resolution was not in order, as a minority had a right to have their Protest entered on the journal. In this decision two of his colleagues concurred, and one dissented.

Several members here rose to points of order.

Mr. Simpson withdrew the first part of his resolution, and the remainder was then adopted.

On motion, the special committee of nine were allowed to retire.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Report of the Committee on Episcopacy.

The Committee on the Episcopacy presented the following:—

"Whereas, the Committee on Episcopacy do not find it practicable to report the number of bishops necessary to be elected at this conference; and whereas, the report of said committee is not essential to the action of the conference in the premises; therefore,

"Resolved, That this conference elect two additional bishops, and that to-morrow, (Friday,) at ten o'clock, be fixed as the time for electing said bishops, and the other general officers of the Church."

Dr. Smith said, it occurred to him that they could not be ready to vote for that resolution until they knew what necessity there was for an increase of bishops. He thought it strange that the preamble should state the fact that they had not that information, and yet recommend the General Conference to go into the election. He was not sure whether such election was necessary at all; or, if necessary, whether it should be for two, or three, or for one only. They could not know this until they heard from the episcopacy on the subject. He thought there was a disposition to hurry this matter forward; he would not say by design, but with indecent haste. There were many circumstances involved in the question, and before the conference could entertain it, they must decide what was to be done with Bishop Andrew; what relation he was to sustain, and whether they would have to appoint one in his place. These were questions of vast importance, and he should suppose the episcopacy would have something to introduce in relation to this subject.

Mr. Cartwright said, they had been for two or three weeks on important business, and that they had not done much, important though it was. It could not be disguised that they could not sit there for ever, and they were determined they would not; bishops or no bishops, officers or no officers, they must, and would go back to their homes and their charges. From circumstances, he would not say by design, as the brother from Virginia had said —

Dr. Smith.—I must correct the speaker. I expressly said, I would not say by design.

Mr. Cartwright.—Yes, I know very well; but you did the thing so beautifully, I was trying to put it in the same way. Well, then, by some strange concatenation of causes, the thing has been staved off, and is now to be staved off for ever. He would relieve his brother from Virginia, by reminding him that the bishops, in their address, had already given them information which fixed a principle in the matter. At an early date from that conference, they had said that six effective men would be sufficient for the work, and a committee had been appointed to act in the premises. Was that committee burdened with labour? So was the conference. Were they pressed for time? Were its members on other committees? &c., &c. In all these difficulties every member of that conference shared. The best way was to walk quietly up to the question, and make the number they wanted. He was not anxious about the matter, but he wanted the business done. Some members of the conference were gone home; others were sick, and others would go home if the world came to an end. He appreciated the importance of the question to which the brother had alluded; but they must have editors, and book agents, and a missionary secretary; and if they did the thing that in his judgment was right, they would elect more bishops; and he should take his share in that election with an eye to their usefulness to the *whole* Church. He was ready for action, and not disposed to wait till he had set up his own standard and had made his plans conformable thereto. It was a question in which all were equally interested—not an election of an officer for this department, or that, but for the *Church*.

Mr. Collins.—I move the previous question.

Mr. Early.—I appeal to the known courtesy and generosity of the gentleman, not thus to shut us out of the discussion.

Mr. Collins.—I will withdraw the motion, if brother Early will promise to renew it at the conclusion of his speech.

Mr. Early.—But brother Early cannot make any such promise.

The motion was withdrawn, and Mr. Early proceeded.

It was all very well for the brother from Illinois to wish this question brought to an issue; but Virginia was differently situated, and was not willing at present to say that they were all one family. That brother had said they were one family, and yet he talked of this side, and that side of the house, and says that that side is ready to make the appointments of officers, &c. But this side has not been consulted in the caucus at which he was present. Let not his brother say, then, that the conference was ready. The south had had no caucus, such as was said to be had by the other side, and at which rumour said the brother from Illinois was present, and at which they proceeded to nominate officers for election.

Mr. Cartwright.—We have had no caucus but what we invited the south into, and some of them were there.

Mr. Early.—I do not doubt what that brother says, when he speaks of his own knowledge; I know him too well for that. Only the south did not receive the invitation: the messenger failed to deliver it, I suppose.

(Several voices exclaimed they had had no invitation.)

Mr. Winner called the speakers to order.

Mr. Cartwright said he must explain when he was thus alluded to; and Mr. Early proceeded. The brother says we are waiting to arrange our plans; that we shall then be ready to go into action, and not before. I merely meant to show that they have had their meeting, and thus got the advantage over us, and I appeal to his generosity, whether he will take such advantage.

Mr. Cartwright.—The south have held caucuses from time immemorial, and we have only had one little bit of a thing.

Mr. Early.—My information was from good authority as well as from public speeches. The south cannot have a bishop, and we have had no caucus on the subject.

Mr. Cartwright.—But there was one for other officers. If you keep going on making these statements, I shall keep replying.

Mr. Early, (in reply to a further remark of Mr. Cartwright, which we did not catch.) We will pray for him when he comes up to the altar and confesses his sins. (Mr. Cartwright, I won't do that.) But seriously, the proposition is, that to-morrow morning at ten o'clock we go into an election of as many bishops as are necessary. You recommend six, as necessary for the work, sir; but how many have you now? Three, or four, or have you *five*, sir? We have not been told yet in what relation one stands to the Church!—whether you will return him as a

bishop, or as a suspended man. Whether he is to be supported in Georgia by his "darkies," as they say, or out of the common funds of the connection. We have no evidence, and therefore cannot tell how many you want. That is not all, sir. After the declaration presented in good faith by the south, and laid on your table, it is perfectly unnecessary to send any man to us in the capacity of bishop who has taken ground against Bishop Andrew. Nor is it courteous or fair to bring this on now, while the brethren are out advising on a point of vital importance as to its bearing on this question. (The speaker alluded to the committee on the division of the Church.) Before we go into an election, we want to understand who and what we are going into an election for. I believe a majority of the Episcopal Committee decided that they would not go into an election until the question of the division of the Church was settled. (Some person here contradicted the speaker somewhat positively, and he proceeded.) Doctors, you know, sir, may differ, and very honestly differ, but there is no need of flat contradiction among gentlemen and ministers. If I have erred, it is an error of the head and not of the heart. There has been no want of diligence on the part of the Committee on Episcopacy, and the statement I made is their apology for not acting in the matter. Some persons have affected to know who are to be book agents and assistant agents, and who are fit for bishops in the east and in the west. But they have never been across the Ohio—they have never crossed Dixon's line—

A member.—The speaker has occupied fifteen minutes—his time is up.

Another member made some observations in so low and indistinct a tone, that the reporter could only gather that they were of the character of strictures upon Mr. Early, and alluded to the unprofitableness of his address.

The conference, by vote, extending the time, Mr. Early continued: I thank the conference for their courtesy in extending the time. I had, however, just done. I could not myself make a reply to a personal outrage on me as a gentleman, which that brother has committed. I have nothing more to say, sir, if the bishops will tell us what they are going to do with Bishop Andrew.

Case of Bishop Andrew.

Bishop Soule.—It was my intention to present to the conference a document, asking instruction respecting Bishop Andrew, whenever the conference is willing to hear it.

Mr. Early.—I move, sir, that the present resolution be laid on the table until that information is given. Agreed to.

Bishop Soule then presented the following document:—

"To the General Conference.

Rev. and Dear Brethren—

As the case of Bishop Andrew unavoidably involves the future *action* of the superintendents, which, in their judgment, in the present position of the bishop, they have no discretion to decide upon, they respectfully request of the General Conference *official* instruction, in answer to the following questions:—

First.—Shall Bishop Andrew's name remain as it now stands in the Minutes, Hymn-book, and Discipline, or shall it be struck off of these official records?

Second.—How shall the bishop obtain his support?—as provided for in the form of Discipline, or in some other way?

Third.—What work, if any, may the bishop perform; and how shall he be appointed to the work?

JOSHUA SOULE,
ELIJAH HEDDING,
BEVERLY WAUGH,
THOMAS A. MORRIS.

Mr. Bowen moved that the communication be referred to a committee of three. They would hardly be able to take up that document without some reflection.

Dr. Longstreet said he could not conceive how a committee could act upon a matter of that kind, which could only be determined in the house collectively. Suppose the committee reported that Bishop Andrew was deposed, or the contrary, would they have advanced one nail's breadth to the issue? The communication was, in fact, an appeal to the sense of the house, to interpret their own decision. It necessarily involved that, for it was plain that, until the bishops received such interpretation, they could not act. He proposed that the sense of the house be taken separately on each question.

Mr. Collins inquired whether there was any communication from Bishop Andrew. Some thought the resolution in his case mandatory, and others thought it advisory only. He thought it important at this stage to know in what light the bishop himself was disposed to regard it, if there were any communication of his sentiments from him. If the chair would give a response it might save discussion.

Dr. Capers said, he supposed the brother could not mean that there might be a communication to the conference from Bishop Andrew, which had been suppressed, and he was sure he could not mean to use any private communication from the bishop to a confidential friend.

Mr. Collins replied, he did not mean either; but supposed there might be some public, but not official, communication. His request to the chair was quite respectful. For himself, he was quite ready to meet the three points in the communication from the episcopacy.

The president said he had no information to give; and Bishop Soule observed that the superintendents had not asked that the conference should go into the resolution at all, but simply for official instruction for the future action of the superintendents.

Mr. Slicer said they had had committee after committee on this subject, with little or no success. One committee was now out from conference consulting on a matter springing out of it, and he could not conceive that any good would result from referring this communication to a committee. If a communication were there from Bishop Andrew, it would not relieve the case at all. He might have decided upon one or other of half a dozen different courses of action, but that would not affect the decision of conference at all, or regulate them in their conclusions, as the officers to whom were intrusted the discharge of the high functions of the episcopacy, the superintendents, must have instructions as to the course they should pursue. They asked three distinct questions, which that conference was as well able to answer now as it would be to-morrow night. He moved that the paper be taken up and acted upon item by item.

Dr. Durbin could have wished that this part of the same general business had lain over until the committee to whom the Protest was referred had brought in their report. But if it were necessary that the answers to the questions of the episcopacy should be given at once, his mind was long since made up and his sentiments repeatedly avowed. He was ready to vote that Bishop Andrew's name should remain, that he should be supported according to the form of Discipline, and that as it regarded the third, the determination of that question was with Bishop Andrew, and not with that conference or the superintendents. The last reply he expected would call forth remark from what had now got to be called the other side, though for his part he had always hoped and did still hope that there would be no division. He (Dr. D.) understood that the bishop had taken advice from the south, who had given to him in writing their opinion as to what they thought his duty in the case. The majority who voted that resolution intended to give Bishop Andrew *their* solemn sense and judgment as to what they thought was his duty in the premises, and thus both sides were before the bishop, and their object was to let Bishop Andrew say whether he would continue to exercise the functions of his office after receiving the counsels of that conference. And as soon as Bishop Andrew shall say to the bishops that he differs in opinion from the majority of this conference, and does not feel at liberty to follow its counsels, the episcopacy have no right to withhold from him his work, inasmuch as he is the only person who has a right to reply to that question.

Mr. M'Ferrin observed that the decision of the brother last up would throw this conference into a very strange position. There is a rule which says, that if a bishop shall cease to travel without the consent of the General Conference, he shall be expelled. Now this conference refuses to say which way Bishop Andrew shall act. It leaves his name on the record, supports him from the funds, and by a vote of their own leave it optional with him whether he shall travel or not. They say it is the sense of this conference that he cease to travel; and then, if he do not travel, at the next General Conference they will expel him for desisting from travelling. They said in point of fact,—

“You shall and you shant,
You will and you wont;
You'll be damn'd if you do,
You'll be damn'd if you don't.”

This is a very strange proceeding. Let the conference come out, and say at once what shall be done in the premises.

The proposer of the reference withdrew his motion, and Mr. Mitchell proposed the following resolutions, in reply to the inquiries of the superintendents:—

"Resolved 1st, as the sense of this conference, That Bishop Andrew's name stand in the Minutes, Hymn-Book, and Discipline, as formerly.

"Resolved 2d. That the rule in relation to the support of a bishop, and his family, applies to Bishop Andrew.

"Resolved 3d. That whether any, and in what work Bishop Andrew be employed, is to be determined by his own decision and action, in relation to the previous action of this conference in his case."

Mr. Randall moved, as an amendment to the first, that the words "with the preamble and resolutions in his case attached," which was promptly voted down, amid cries of "outrage," "insult," &c.: and the "ayes and noes" were called for on the first resolution. For it one hundred and fifty-four, against eighteen. For the second resolution, ayes one hundred and fifty-one, noes fourteen.

Mr. J. T. Peck moved, as a substitute for the third, the following:—"That this conference do not deem it necessary to remove the responsibility from Bishop Andrew, where it now rests."

Laid on the table, as were some other substitutes.

Dr. Winans should go against the resolution. The Discipline of the Church knew no discretion in an officer of recognized standing to withdraw himself from the duties of his office. By the two votes just passed, it was clear and unequivocal that Bishop Andrew had an unquestioned standing as a bishop of the M. E. Church, by a vote of a large majority of that Church, and the provision of the Discipline; and he congratulated the south on the fact, that they had now a RECOGNIZED SLAVEHOLDING BISHOP, whose name appeared on all their records after being known as a slaveholder. And that bishop had no right to elect as to whether he would serve, or in what way he would serve.

Mr. Cartwright thought his brother Winans shouted before he was happy.

Dr. Winans.—I was happy.

Mr. Cartwright.—Yes; but the brother was only happy in the false fires of his own warm imagination, &c.

The ayes and noes were then taken on the third resolution. Several asked to be excused; some retired; and the result of the vote was ayes one hundred and three, noes sixty-seven.

FRIDAY, JUNE 7.

Course of Study.

Mr. Martindale moved the taking up of the report of the committee on the four years' course of study, which was taken up accordingly. The first resolution proposed that the bishops should prepare, and have printed, at the Book Concern, a list of books, which should be made the basis of the proposed course of study.

Dr. Longstreet said he would oppose this movement in a very short argument, viz.; that without any of these requisitions in their ministry they had had hitherto most signal success. This proposition was only the first step toward other conditions which would hereafter be imposed upon the ministry. At present, it was the glory of Methodism that it presented a minister for every class. A few illiterate men might have crept into the ministry, but they did no harm; and no one could deny that they were successful in the work of awakening sinners. Introduce this plan, and the preachers would become too scientific, and preach over the people's heads.

Mr. Perkins was in favour of the plan proposed. He did not want the young men to grow up in ignorance. He did not think that a man's having a little information prevented his having a feeling heart; and had yet to learn that education kept a man from the cottage of the poor.

Dr. Pierce regretted that he must differ from his very worthy friend and brother; and this was the second time that he (Dr. P.) had regretted that a man of his learning and influence should throw out hints so ungrounded in themselves, and so injurious in their tendencies. The Apostle Paul thought differently, and, in his epistle, directed his beloved son in the Gospel, until he came, to give attendance to reading and study, and cultivate sound speech, that they which were of a contrary mind might be ashamed. He did not think the plan proposed by the committee to be in any sense a test of a man's call to the ministry.

Mr. Cooper denounced the measure, as making literary attainments a condition of membership in the ministry, and the resolution came into direct conflict with the Discipline.

The report and resolutions were adopted.

Book Concern—Richmond Christian Advocate, &c.

A motion to lay on the table a motion to take up the report of the Committee on Licentiates prevailed; and the report on the Book Concern was taken up. It recommended a grant of \$2,500 to the Richmond Christian Advocate.

Mr. Raper explained the circumstances under which the grant was required, which were still more minutely and fully stated by

Mr. L. M. Lee, who gave a detailed account of the "rise and progress" of the Christian Advocate, in Richmond. It was started in 1832, by private individuals, and continued by them until 1836. In that year the Virginia Conference purchased the whole establishment, and presented it to the General Conference in 1840, that it might be published under the sanction and authority of the Church. The whole concern did not cost the General Conference one cent. The paper had been successful in carrying out the purpose for which it was established. It had met its current expenses; not a debt had been incurred in meeting the proposition from the General Conference, either to raise \$6,000, or commence with three thousand subscribers. In doing this he had himself become personally liable for about \$3,000, and they looked to the General Conference that, as a matter of justice, they should be relieved. They had placed in the hands of the General Conference an office, &c., worth \$12,000, and three thousand subscribers; and he deliberately gave it as his opinion, that, if the whole establishment were disposed of that day, it would leave a nett profit of not less than \$3,000.

At the last General Conference \$7,000 were granted to another establishment, to relieve it from embarrassments. They did not ask so much for the Richmond Christian Advocate, but they asked something; they asked that conference to "loose it and let it go,"—go freely and clearly without incumbrance. At present they had to charge \$2.50 per annum. This prevented their competing with others. The Christian Advocate and Journal was published at \$2, and many took it in consequence. They would like the privilege of reducing theirs to the same, that they might compete with it, as they believed they could.

One of the committee said they were almost unanimous in recommending the grant.

Resolution agreed to.

Report of the Committee of Nine on the Division of the Church.

Mr. Paine moved to suspend the rules in order to take up the report of the committee of nine. He thought it necessary to dispose of the most important business first, and the report of this committee he considered of vast importance.

Dr. Bangs concurred as to the importance of this report, of which he thought the conference must have been convinced, simply from hearing it read. If the other business were first disposed of, the number of members then left would be but small. He hoped, therefore, the Conference would take up the report.

Mr. Cartwright thought it was natural or constitutional somehow to make difficulties. Now they could live a hundred years without that report, but the election of conference officers *must* be attended to.

Mr. Crowder said Mr. Cartwright might not feel so sensibly as he and those with him did on the subject of this report, but every member *ought* deeply to feel its importance; for while he believed they might live a hundred or a thousand years *with* that report, he was equally sure they could not live without it.

Mr. Porter said there were brethren there whom they would see no more when the election was over. He deemed the report as important as any that had been before that body, and wished to meet it in the cool of the morning, understandingly and sincerely.

The motion to suspend the rules was carried, and the report taken up and read.

"The select committee of nine, to consider and report on the declaration of the delegates from the conferences of the slaveholding states, beg leave to submit the following report:—

"Whereas, a declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with the signatures of *fifty-one* delegates of the body, from thirteen annual conferences in

the slaveholding states, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and

"Whereas, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration asks attention as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

"Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences in General Conference assembled,

"1st. That, should the delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary of such connection:—All the societies, stations, and conferences adhering to the Church in the south, by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the M. E. Church shall in no wise attempt to organize Churches or societies within the limits of the Church south, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the south reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to stations, societies, and conferences adhering, by vote of a majority, to the M. E. Church; provided also that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated.

"2d. That ministers, local and travelling, of every grade and office in the M. E. Church, may, as they prefer, remain in that Church, or, without blame, attach themselves to the Church south.

"3d. Resolved, by the delegates of all the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That we recommend to all the annual conferences, at their first approaching sessions, to authorize a change of the sixth restrictive article, so that the first clause shall read thus:—'They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, nor of the Chartered Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the travelling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children, and to such other purposes as may be determined upon by the votes of two-thirds of the members of the General Conference.'

"4th. That whenever the annual conferences, by a vote of three-fourths of all their members voting on the third resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the sixth restrictive article, the agents at New-York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to deliver over to any authorized agent or appointee of the Church south, should one be authorized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers, Church members, or citizens within its boundaries, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the Southern Church, and that said agents also convey to the aforesaid agent, or appointee of the south, all the real estate, and assign to him all the property, including presses, stock, and all right and interest connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, which now belong to the M. E. Church.

"5th. That when the annual conferences shall have approved the aforesaid change in the sixth restrictive article, there shall be transferred to the above agent of the Southern Church so much of the capital and produce of the Methodist Book Concern as will, with the notes, book accounts, presses, &c., mentioned in the last resolution, bear the same proportion to the whole property of said Concern that the travelling preachers in the Southern Church shall bear to all the travelling ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the division to be made on the basis of the number of travelling preachers in the forthcoming Minutes.

"6th. That the above transfer shall be in the form of annual payments of \$2,500 per annum, and specifically in stock of the Book Concern, and in southern notes and accounts due the establishment, and accruing after the first transfer mentioned above; and until all the payments are made, the Southern Church shall share in all the nett profits of the Book Concern, in the proportion that the amount due them, or in arrears, bears to all the property of the Concern.

"7th. That — be and they are hereby appointed commissioners to act in concert with the same number of commissioners appointed by the southern organization, (should one be formed,) to estimate the amount which will fall due to the south by the preceding rule, and to have full powers to carry into effect the whole arrange-

ments proposed with regard to the division of property, should the separation take place. And if by any means a vacancy occurs in this board of commissioners, the Book Committee at New-York shall fill said vacancy.

"8th. That whenever any agents of the Southern Church are clothed with legal authority or corporate power to act in the premises, the agents at New-York are hereby authorized and directed to act in concert with said southern agents, so as to give the provisions of these resolutions a legally binding force.

"9th. That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in meeting-houses, parsonages, colleges, schools, conference funds, cemeteries, and of every kind within the limits of the southern organization, shall be for ever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises.

"10th. That the Church so formed in the south shall have a common property in all the copy-rights in possession of the Book Concern at New-York and Cincinnati, at the time of the settlement by the commissioners.

"Resolved, That the bishops be respectfully requested to lay that part of this report requiring the action of the annual conferences before them as soon as possible, beginning with the New-York Conference.

"ROBERT PAINE, *Chairman.*

"*New-York, June 7, 1844.*"

Dr. Elliott moved its adoption, and would explain his views on the subject without attempting to approach debate. He had had the opportunity of examining it, and had done so narrowly. He believed it would insure the purposes designed, and would be for the best interests of the Church. It was his firm opinion that this was a proper course for them to pursue, in conformity with the Scriptures, and the best analogies they could collect from the ancient Churches, as well as from the best-organized modern Churches. All history did not furnish an example of so large a body of Christians remaining in such close and unbroken connection as the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was now found necessary to separate this large body, for it was becoming unwieldy. He referred to the Churches at Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, which, though they continued as one, were at least as distinct as the Methodist Episcopal Church would be if the suggested separation took place. The Church of England was one under the Bishops of Canterbury and York, connected and yet distinct. In his own mind it had been for years perfectly clear that to this conclusion they must eventually come. Were the question that now unhappily agitated the body dead and buried, there would be good reason for passing the resolutions contained in that report. As to their representation in that General Conference, one out of twenty was but a meagre representation, and to go on as they had done, it would soon be one out of thirty. And the body was now too large to do business advantageously. The measure contemplated was not schism, but separation for their mutual convenience and prosperity.

Dr. Paine said, the committee wished a verbal alteration made. In the fifth resolution "preachers" were spoken of in the Southern Church, and "ministers" in the northern. Nothing was said there of the Chartered Fund—the committee had prepared the following additional resolution to meet the omission:—

"12. Resolved, That the book agents at New-York be directed to make such compensation to the conferences south for their dividend from the Chartered Fund as the commissioners to be provided for shall agree upon."

Mr. Crowder.—Is it dividend, or capital?

Dr. Bangs.—It must be dividend—the capital cannot be touched.

Mr. Griffith had a few words to say in relation to this extraordinary measure, against which he would record his dissent if he stood alone in the matter. He contended that if to pass an act that was against the law be termed extra judicial, then this measure was extra legislative. They dared not refer this question to the annual conferences, which the constitution required them to do, but they put it on a very different issue, viz., When a majority of that conference thought it expedient, then the annual conferences were to be applied to, to make a distribution of the property of the body. They put it in the power of any body of men to reorganize themselves and make a distinct body whenever they chose. He denied that any one had a right to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church. He wanted to know if they were sent here to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church. If there was any such authority, he had not seen it. Again, the report went to disfranchise many members of their common right to choose where they will belong. To be sure, it granted to

certain border circuits to say where they would belong, but those interior it compelled to submission, giving them no choice if they wished to be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether it should be the southern or northern. Where was the authority for all this? Where that liberty of conscience of which no man should be deprived? The man who would dare to deprive his fellow-man of the rights of conscience was a tyrant, whether he might be a member of the Methodist Episcopal General Conference or a Pope. He hoped the ayes and noes would be called, that the people might know which delegates sent there for other purposes had consented to the separation of the great body of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. Cartwright felt a little embarrassed; not the usual embarrassment he felt when he spoke before his superiors; but he was embarrassed, in the first place, because he saw his southern brethren coming up to this measure in a solid phalanx; and, in the second place, because he saw lawyers and doctors, to say nothing of scribes and Pharisees, lending their aid to it. He was also embarrassed because they were on the eve of a final adjournment, and if all were as anxious to retire as he was, they would have gone home long ago. They had boasted, as the public newspapers and your records will show, that the Methodist Episcopal Church is one and indivisible—a unit. They had not had any schism, and perhaps they would not have any now. He thanked God that in the radical agitation he was one of the noble twenty-six who stood up against it. He would rather die himself than kill the Church. He thought the measure was a wicked one, and that it robbed both the north and the south of their rights. He spoke of the south and then of the north, and said if any of the north wanted to go with the south he would say with all his heart, Amen; let them go, and God speed them. He thought the proposed arrangements would create war and strife in the border conferences; he knew it to be an easy matter to take it in this lumping, gulping way, and to swallow it altogether, but he chose to go right in the outset, and while he disclaimed their right to lord it over the people, he also disclaimed their right to rob the people.

He then referred to Dr. Elliott. He had defended the doctor but a few days since, but the doctor had exceeded him in his eloquence to-day. Nevertheless he claimed to have as much common sense as Dr. Elliott; and though his sense might be common, he trusted that it was not "unclean." The doctor had passed over musty books, and had gone back to the "days before the flood," or very shortly after, to find examples. The Methodist Episcopal Church was the creature of Providence, and he wanted to know why the doctor's faith failed him when they entered on this ocean of slavery. Now he thought Providence had always undertaken for them. They had been Ishmaelites, every man's hand was against them, not only in the world, but in every political manufacturing shop; but, upborne by the majesty of truth and the baptismal fire of the Holy Ghost, they had outriden the storm, and were not wrecked. From the time of O'Kelley down to the last Scottite disturbances God had provided a *trash-trap* to take the scum away. He had trusted God before, and he was not afraid to trust him again. He thanked God that the Methodist Episcopal Church was not a prison, where they were obliged to stay, but there was a door in and a door out. He was opposed to this measure, because it would set a bad precedent, and would have a tendency to break the Church into a thousand ramifications. If they had come up to their conferences in view of this state of things, the case would have been altered entirely, but he knew that some parts of the interior had never heard of such a state of things, and it would be a difficult matter to satisfy the people that we have not acted in advance of the Discipline and constitution. He contended that they had no authority conferred upon them, either directly or indirectly, to divide the Church. As one of the southern members had said to him emphatically, so he would say to them now, Pause before you go too far, pause—and if you will not do it for ours, do it for your own sakes. He was willing to go for this proposition, and this alone, to lay the whole case before the people during the next four years, and if the next General Conference came up instructed to enact this measure, they will have some excuse for doing so. He had discharged his duty in the fear of God and man, and he would go home with a quiet conscience.

Dr. Paine said that he approached the subject with friendly feelings toward all, and with solemnity, on account of its importance. This had been pronounced a revolutionary measure. There is not in any government a provision made to divide itself, and consequently it must be done by violence, or in a peaceful manner, by common consent. The case of Bishop Andrew had thrown them into a peculiar

sending them to Liberia; but when the conference desired it, he said he would permit them to go to any free state.

Mr. Slicer. I have no recollection of his agreeing to their going to a free state; but I do distinctly recollect that he put the issue of their freedom on their consent to go to Liberia.

Mr. Collins. On the basis of two *ifs*. *If* his wife and *if* his slaves consented, neither of which could he promise for.

Mr. Davis. What is stated by brother Slicer is correct. He did say, that if these coloured persons were willing to go to Liberia, and if his wife would consent, he should be willing that they should go.

Dr. Smith. Brother Gere, do you recollect distinctly whether brother Harding said as you have stated?

Mr. Gere. I think those were the words, to the best of my recollection.

Mr. Drake said he thought oral testimony ought not to be taken.

Bishop Soule. I have admitted it at brother Smith's instance.

Dr. Smith. What redress would there be without this? The laws require that the annual conference shall keep a record of every question and answer, both great and small. Has that been done?

Mr. Collins. This small matter may be disposed of at once. Brother Harding admitted the fact. We wanted no testimony, and we took none. Brother Harding was testimony against himself.

Bishop Soule. I take it for granted that you have no other proper testimony but what is presented to you in those journals: that there was not a witness called—no testimony given. You have heard the whole of the matter so far as it is on the records, and it is, I presume, to supply this defectiveness that he calls for those points from the delegates.

A member made some observation, and Bishop Soule answered that Dr. Smith would call for any witness he might want.

Dr. Smith. I do not know, sir, that I would care to meet every member of this conference on the subject. I know that it is not admissible, but still I have, myself, no particular objection to it. I feel obliged by the reference made to Discipline. What is the meaning of Discipline? That your journal should contain every thing—

Mr. Collins. It does.

Dr. Smith, (emphatically.) Stick a peg there. A resolution is passed at the Baltimore Conference, requiring the appellant to submit to certain conditions. He refuses. Does the journal state under what circumstances? And do not the merits of the case rest on the circumstances? Why, sir, the course pursued shows that the matter rests just there. One says, if Mr. Harding had refused with such a declaration, there would have been no dispute about it. In the judgment of all who had taken any interest in the merits of this case, it turned on the manner and circumstances of his refusal. Then why not record it? It proves a defectiveness in the journal. Upon that journal we rely for the prosecution, and they upon it for the defence. But behold you, sir, on the very point at issue it is silent! Who shall suffer the wrong here? The appellant or the Baltimore Conference? Who are in the wrong that the journal is thus defective? I leave it to this conference to decide, every man in his own mind. I am, sir, entitled to the oral testimony in the absence of the correct record which it was the duty of that annual conference to furnish us with. And that testimony goes to sustain us. What is the testimony? "I clearly remember," says brother Gere, "as clearly as if I had heard it this morning, that brother Harding said, over and over again, that, with the consent of the servants, he stood pledged, and pledged his wife, to send them to Liberia; or, with their consent, to let them go to any free state in the Union."

Mr. Collins. If you understood his wife to be pledged, you are certainly mistaken.

Mr. Gere, on being appealed to, said, that, as distinctly as he could remember, the words were, "I pledge on my own behalf and that of my wife, that, if they consent, they shall go to a free state."

Mr. Hildt. I think brother Gere must be mistaken. Conference was deeply interested in this subject, and I think every member would pay attention; and I do not recollect that Mr. Harding at any time said that he was willing, with the consent of his wife, that the slaves should go to a free state.

Dr. Smith. Well, if there were twenty present who did not hear it, that is no proof that it did not take place. Brother Collins was involved in the matter, and

the other brethren had their feelings warmly enlisted, and it is no wonder that they did not hear all that brother Harding said on this subject. I think you will find that they were so enlisted to carry out their own purposes—honest as they felt they were—that they urged the brother to comply with their condition, intending to investigate the propriety of it hereafter. You cannot suppose they would take a course of this kind unless their feelings were excited, and so excited that they did not hear what is in the clear and distinct remembrance of the brother himself, and of many more, if we had them all here. Others not recollecting it, is no proof that it did not take place. But I have positive proof that he did make this declaration. Its not appearing on the record is not our fault, but the fault of the conference, and we are entitled to the positive testimony. I shall, therefore, assume that brother Harding said, that with the consent of these servants, they should be sent to any state where they could enjoy their freedom. The conference, however, we learn, adopted the report of the committee, notwithstanding the pledges given by Mr. Harding—a report binding him to make the required pledge of manumission. Near the close of the conference his case was called up, and he again required to comply with the decision of the conference. He again refused. At this stage of the proceedings brother Steele moved a resolution to locate him. This was ruled out. (No, from Mr. Collins.)

Mr. Harding. There was a resolution proposed by brother Steele to have me located, and it was ruled out by the President.

Dr. Smith. And ruled out by the President?

Mr. Collins. I think it was withdrawn.

Mr. Harding. Brother Steele made the motion, and Bishop Waugh ruled it out.

Mr. Sargent. I was not the secretary of the Baltimore Conference at the last session, but I had a seat adjoining brother Steele when he made the motion to locate him. He did withdraw the motion, and at my suggestion.

Dr. Bangs. It must be very unpleasant to the speaker to be interrupted, but I wish to speak to a point of order in reference to oral testimony. Must not the speaker confine himself to the record? If the journal is not complete, the case can be quashed or nonsuited, and sent back. It is competent for him to make that appeal, but I insist that it is not in order to travel out of the record.

Dr. Smith. I could not show that the record is incomplete without reference to oral testimony.

Mr. Early. What brother cannot see that he is opening and amplifying his case? Will not the Baltimore Conference have the right to do the same in reply? Are you constantly to stop him, and confine him to the record? Permit them both to amplify, and let them correct him at the proper time.

Bishop Soule. I should not have permitted one of these queries to be put only at the instance of the speaker, who requested at the outset, that, if he erred, the delegation would set him right on the spot, to save time and labour in the premises.

Dr. Smith. Well, sir, by the testimony of the brethren, a resolution was moved to locate, which, by suggestion, was withdrawn. I wish the conference not to forget that; it may appear that this point has a great deal to do with the final issue. Brother Collins then moved the suspension of the appellant, and brother Slicer moved for a committee further to investigate the case. The committee was appointed. They met, and appellant appeared before that committee, and submitted the following paper from William D. Merrick, of Maryland, United States senator from the first congressional district, touching the legal points involved in the case:—

“At the request of Mr. Harding, I have to state, that under the laws of Maryland, no slave can be emancipated to remain in that state, nor unless provision be made by the person emancipating him for his removal from the state, which removal must take place, unless for good and sufficient reason the competent authorities grant permission to the manumitted slave to remain.

“There has lately (winter of 1843) been a statute enacted by the state legislature, securing to married females the property (slaves of course included) which was theirs at the time of their marriage, and protecting it from the power and liabilities of their husbands.

(Signed)

WM. D. MERRICK.”

This was read before the committee, but they were so occupied in “labouring” with the brother, to bring him to terms of submission, that it seems they entirely overlooked the opinion of this gentleman, and laying aside the legal view which

attitude. He could not say what was the state of feeling in his conference, but those brethren who lived nearer had heard from their people, and they hear that they are very much excited. Unless steps of conciliation were taken, of which he saw no prospect, the possibility of separation could not be denied, and this measure was taken that it might be effected pleasantly. He did not know for certainty that separation would take place, that it would become positively and imperiously necessary. He ardently hoped it would not. The south generally did not desire it, they were unwilling that it should take place; and for himself, he could honestly say, that the most painful circumstances through which he ever passed, except the pangs of conviction and repentance before God, were those connected with this subject. The south had resorted to this measure to avoid a greater calamity. If on arriving at home, in order to keep down faction, and prosecute harmoniously the great end of the Methodist ministry, they found it necessary to act upon this measure, they should feel bound to do it; and out of love to Methodist doctrines and institutions, to the souls of men, and the honour of their common Master, carry out the provisions of this enactment. But they would not thus act unless driven to it. The separation would not be effected by the passage of these resolutions through the General Conference. They must pass the annual conferences, beginning at New-York, and when they came round to the south the preachers there would think, and deliberate, and feel the pulse of public sentiment, and of the members of the Church, and act in the fear of God and with a single desire for his glory. Let not brethren suppose that because they hailed from the south they were pugnacious and schismatic. They were not reckless men, but men of God and Christians. They had no revolutionary designs, but desired to go home to their people, prepared to satisfy their demands, and because they loved souls they wished to prepare for the worst. They should be one people still until it was formally announced, by a convention of the southern Churches, that they had resolved to ask an organization in accordance with the provisions of the report. Twelve or eighteen months would transpire ere they could act in the premises, by which time the feverish excitement—if feverish excitement it be—will have passed away. The south, however, felt seriously apprehensive, that the necessity even now existed. Yet he repeated they were not schismatics, no “trash-trap” was to catch them. He hoped the brother did not apply that offensive term to them.

Mr. Cartwright. I did not.

Dr. Paine continued. They were not revolutionists, and though the press—some of them, and these perhaps were mere letter-writers—had dealt in vituperative remarks; he called upon them to bear witness that their discussions had proceeded with marked kindness and courtesy generally, while in committee not one unkind word had been uttered, or an unkind feeling existed. Brethren who had heard from their people were alarmed at the increasing dissatisfaction among them, and all the southern brethren desired was to have some ground to stand upon when they got home. He could wish the discussions now to be at an end, and that they should go home to pray, to think, and deliberate. Brethren had placed them in a sad dilemma, for they had practically disputed the equality of their rights. The brethren say, that they put their dissent upon this; he wished they had put their dissent upon the acts that had brought them to this, and that they had believed them when they told them of this state of things. As to the allusions that had been made to border warfare, he could only say that the measure had been prepared as a peace measure. If they were inclined for warfare, the south had talent enough to enter upon it. If they (the south) were to call a mass-meeting in this city, and state their wrongs, they would be able to enlist almost universal sympathy on their behalf, and the city and the Churches would be agitated; but this the south deprecated. They strongly deprecated it; this measure had been concocted in a spirit of compromise and fraternal feeling, in the hope of preventing agitation and schism. Let no man interrupt the fraternal and loving spirit they sought to establish, but let them enter upon the question in the fear of God, and let their brethren be assured the south entertained no bitter or hostile feelings in the premises.

Dr. Luckey said that on some subjects he had no objection to a little levity, but he thought this of too grave and serious a character. It was a serious and eventful movement, because they had come to a very serious and eventful crisis in the progress of Methodism in this country. He regarded the resolution as provisional and preliminary, settling nothing at present, but providing, in an amicable and proper way, for such action as it might hereafter be necessary to take. He hoped such necessity would never arise, and that southern brethren would not find it

necessary to leave them. Reference had been made to secession, &c. But was it not better that they should separate than have a continuation of strife and of warfare? The danger apprehended by his friend from Illinois existed only in the fires of his imagination. He (Dr. L.) had said privately and frequently, that if the separation were necessary, it ought to be amicably and constitutionally effected, and there was no intention of doing it otherwise. Allusion had been made to the radicalism that had disturbed the Church some years ago, but that had no affinity with the present case. He granted that Mr. Wesley had contended at one time for the unity of the Methodist body throughout the world, but he subsequently saw it necessary to permit the connection in the United States to separate, and had it not been for the best?

Dr. Bangs explained the composition of the committee, as formed by three from the south, three from the middle states, and three from the north. They were also instructed, by a resolution of the conference, how to act in the premises; that if they could not adjust the difficulties amicably, they were to provide for separation if they could do so constitutionally. Under such instructions the committee went out and proceeded to interchange their thoughts upon the subject. Great difficulties arose, which were revolved in their minds, and after two days of close labor, after minute inspection and revision of every sentence, they had presented this report, from which the conference would see that they had at least obeyed their instructions, and had met the constitutional difficulty by sending round to the annual conferences that portion of the report which required their concurrence. The speakers who have opposed that report have taken entirely erroneous views of it. It did not speak of division—the word had been carefully avoided through the whole document—it only said, “in the event of a separation taking place,” throwing the responsibility from off the shoulders of the General Conference and upon those who should say that such a separation was necessary. He hoped the time would never come. But what was the true course for men brought into difficulties? Why, there was an old adage—and he knew not that it was any the worse for its age—Of two evils choose the least—the choice was between the violent separation of the south and its peaceable and amicable separation; and which was the lesser evil? He need not answer, for the response was already in every man's breast. Objections had been made on the ground of the resolutions interfering with liberty of conscience on the part of the members, by forcing them to take a position which they might not wish to take. That was a groundless objection altogether. The laws, discipline, doctrines, government, all would be the same, and they should be as warm in their affection toward each other as they were now. [Amen, in a very earnest and feeling tone from Dr. Capers.] Allusion had been made to the course pursued by Mr. Wesley, in reference to the Methodist Church in the United States. The same would apply to the Methodist societies in Ireland. They had an independent conference.

Several voices. No, no.

Mr. T. B. Sargent.—They have a separate relation, just as the government of Ireland differs from the government of England—it is indeed adapted to the civil government.

Dr. Bangs.—That is just what is wanted. The south asked a separate conference, adapted to the institutions of that portion of the country. Another evil was that there was a diversity of sentiment among the border conferences; if the line proposed by the resolutions were drawn it would lessen the evil, and perhaps remove it out of the way altogether. He (Dr. B.) had been a travelling preacher about forty-four years, and gloried in the belief that the Methodist Episcopal Church was one; he had done all in his power to keep it so. He hoped that the providence of God would overrule the present adverse circumstances for good; but if they must separate, was it right to deprive their brethren of the south of their just rights? Would it be right for the majority to deprive the minority of one iota of their rights, temporal or spiritual? He would not do it, and he hoped the conference would come to a unanimous adoption of the report.

Mr. Filmore explained still further the constitution and labours of the committee, and went on to say that the design of God in raising up the Methodists was to spread Scriptural holiness through the land. The brethren from the south feared they could not go on doing this under existing circumstances. The north said if they yielded any of the ground they had taken, they should throw impediments in their own path in carrying out the same object. Now Methodism, as the child of Providence, adjusts herself, as she had always done, to the circumstances of the

case—she proposed that, if these fears proved well grounded, they divide into bands, and go on spreading holiness through their respective territories: their strife, he believed, would be to excel in straight-forward Wesleyan Methodism. The resolutions do not say that the south must go, shall go, will go, or that anybody wants them to go; but simply make provision for such a contingency, and provide that in such case they shall have all necessary munitions of war for carrying on their holy enterprise. He did not think there was a man among them who would dare to lay his head upon his pillow, if he held from his southern brethren one cent of their common funds.

The report had cost the committee three days of close application, and the sub-committee had worked by night as well as by day. Every sentiment in the report had been sifted, and every word weighed, and the committee had brought it in understanding what it was. He was aware it was the work of human hands; but let the General Conference propose fifty amendments, and fifty to one they would amend it for the worse.

Mr. Finley could see in the report no proposition to divide the Church. If he saw such a proposal he should stop at the threshold. Nor did he see anything unconstitutional in it. The constitution did not require them to send abroad a proposition to divide the Church, and it would, therefore, be unconstitutional to send such a proposition to the annual conferences. And now he expected his brother from Illinois (Cartwright) and himself would tear the blanket between them, they having got hold of opposite sides. The parties voting on each side of the great question stood precisely alike. There was a great gulf between them, and he wished there was middle ground, on which both could stand. His heart would have gladly moved further, if he could have secured what he wanted; but he and his friends had gone as far as the safety of the work would allow them. There was one point that had not been touched yet. Mr. Wesley separated the American Church from the English Church. And in 1824-8 there was an application made by the Canada Conference to set them off as a distinct Church; and the General Conference told them they had no power to do so, but gave them liberty to do just what they now proposed to do with the south. They agreed, that if they went off and set up for themselves, we would authorize one of our bishops to ordain a man for them, if they should elect one to the episcopacy.

Mr. Cartwright.—We did not give them any part of the funds.

Dr. Bangs.—The New-York Conference gave them \$10,000.

Mr. Finley.—The General Conference voted that the New-York Conference should make that division, and we are now doing nothing more than we did then.

A call being made for the reading of the journal on this point,

Mr. Hamline took the floor, by consent, until the journals were examined. He explained the action of the committee in reference to the sixth restrictive article. When the first committee met, they had before them a paper which proposed a new form or division of the Church. The committee thought there were difficulties in the way of such a proposition. One provision was, to send it to the annual conferences, but that was unconstitutional and revolutionary in its character; and when their votes came back, the General Conference would have no more authority than they had now. Why, then, send it? The Book Concern is chartered in behalf of the General Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States; and if they did separate until only one state remained, still Methodism would remain the same, and it would still be the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. But if they sent out to the annual conferences to alter one restrictive article, it would be constitutional, and to divide the Book Concern so that they might be honest men and ministers. The resolution goes on to make provision, if the annual conferences concur, for the security and efficiency of the southern conferences; for the Methodist Church would embrace them in its fraternal arms, tendering to them fraternal feelings and the temporalities to which they were entitled. And the committee thought it could not be objected to on the ground of constitutionality. He, for one, would wish to have his name recorded affirming them to be brethren, if they found they must separate. God forbid that they should go as an arm torn out of the body, leaving the point of junction all gory and ghastly! But let them go as brethren "beloved in the Lord," and let us hear their voice responsive, claiming us for brethren. Let us go and preach Jesus to them, and let them come and preach Jesus to us.

Dr. Bond said he had paid attention to the reading of the report, and understood the intention of the committee to be to provide for peace, and love, and harmony still to be perpetuated in the great Methodist family. Such was the declaration,

and he hoped such was the sincere intention of that report. As to the constitutional objection, he presumed that no one there would contend that there could have been any constitutional provision for the separation of one part of the Church from another; and if the necessity of the case now required it, it could only be justified by the adage, that "necessity has no law." In carrying out the provision necessary for such an adjustment, those who framed the report were compelled to assume the right to prevent Churches and societies from deciding according to elective affinity. And hence it had provided that societies or Churches in the interior conferences who went off, or who remained, could not change their relation to the conferences where they were found. They only justified this on the ground of necessity, to avoid the agitations that would grow out of a different state of things. Why, then, (continued Dr. Bond,) if the object is to procure peace and to prevent conflicts—why, then, does it provide for a border warfare from Delaware to the Ohio River? and how much further my geography does not supply data. The Philadelphia Conference has all the slave territory of Delaware, Maryland, and two counties of Virginia; and every one will be left to say how far the border extends, and all that portion of the country must be agitated with the question as to what conference they belong to! When you get to the Baltimore Conference, you have ten counties below the Blue Ridge, and all the valley of Virginia, and here again must be carried on a border warfare! Again, the Ohio Conference and the Pittsburg take in parts of Virginia, and will be exposed to the same border warfare!

Now the brethren cannot suppose, that while the warfare exists on the borders, the interior will be at peace, or that we shall love each other as we ought. The same disastrous state of things will exist beyond the Ohio River, and in every territory where slaveholding and non-slaveholding conferences lie contiguous to each other. You, therefore, provide for a border warfare in the resolutions of that report. I do beseech brethren to weigh well this matter, and that you adhere to the conference lines as they now stand, and then we shall have peace. There will be, perhaps, a little agitation; but nothing of moment, unless the preachers make it. If we must come to this separation—which I have never liked, and which I had hoped never to see in my day—yet, if we must come to it, let us provide for peace through the Churches, and part in such a spirit that we can continue to co-operate in the great work in which we are all engaged, and let us not pass resolutions which will perpetuate border warfare and strife. If it be necessary to abridge rights, you have just as much right to abridge on the borders as in the interior—the necessity is the same in one case as in the other; and it is as absolutely necessary to prescribe the relations along the borders as in the interior. I hope this has been overlooked by the brethren who have brought in this report; perhaps, in making out these resolutions, they have taken the worst course arbitrators can take—*splitting the difference*. This is always a bad plan where a great principle is concerned, as one side must be right. I remember an anecdote of Dr. More's, respecting some travellers who were descending the Alps, and were told by their guides, at a certain part of undercrust in the declivity, to give the reins to their mules, with the assurance that they would safely slide down. One, however, perceived a tree that seemed to be in his path, and he thought he would meet the difficulty half way, and guide his animal a little; and, by thus *splitting the difference*, he ran against the tree. Now, sir, if you attempt to split the difference, you run against the tree. I go for any measure of peace; but I think, if we pass this, our people will accuse us of the abridgment of their rights and privileges for the sake of upholding an abstract principle.

Mr. Collins said he belonged to a part slaveholding and part non-slaveholding country. He, in connection with others, sought some common ground, on which they could all meet and unite in kind and fraternal feelings. They were not able, it seemed, to come to that ground. He had mentioned, at the time of the vote on Bishop Andrew's case, that he should move a reconsideration; and he had done so with the intention that, if any measure could be proposed which would render that action unnecessary, they might recall it. He had seen no such measure yet, and therefore had not moved a reconsideration. He thought the report contained the best proposition, under the circumstances, and they were not prepared to throw out anything which would tend to heal the breach. He hoped they would not come to a separation at all. The southern brethren had taken such ground before them, and they were well known to be men of integrity, as well as talents and piety, and had taken a strong hold upon their people; so that, if the evil could be averted, he believed it would be. But, if it must come, let there be a *pro rata* division of the

concern. The preachers would have to let the members decide the question for themselves.

Mr. Porter said the committee had presented that report as the best thing that could be done under the circumstances. The time was coming when separation must take place. The difficulty was greater now than it was four years ago, and would increase. If there were defects in the document, they could arrest it in the annual conferences. The south could take no action upon it until the annual conferences had decided respecting the sixth rule; and if, when they got home, and calmly and deliberately examined it, they found anything radically wrong, let them stop it in their annual conferences. The document would be printed and published, so that they would have ample opportunity, and better than they could possibly have now, of judging of its real merits.

On motion, the previous question was tried, and voted for by 146 ayes and 23 noes. But Dr. Paine moved a reconsideration, to make an amendment by striking out delegates and inserting conferences; after which Mr. Sandford obtained the floor, and opposed the passage of the report and resolutions. He said the amendment did not affect the views he entertained respecting the measure. He was aware that he should stand in a very small minority, but that did not at all affect his determination. He had no wish to throw brethren into circumstances requiring a separation; nor did he desire, if separation were really and absolutely necessary, to refuse them their portion of the property of the Church. But there was, in his estimation, a great difference between telling brethren, when they had separated, they should have their portion, and opening the door and inviting them to separate. Of the latter character he believed this measure. When they had taken their course, it would be time enough to tell them what they would do. If they had separated, however, before he voted for their having their share of the property, he must be convinced that they had done so *of necessity*. In his opinion, the course now proposed was an encouragement to separation. With these views, he should record his name in opposition to the whole procedure. He must do so, so far as he had a personal responsibility, as the only way in which he could clear his own conscience in the sight of heaven in respect to this measure.

The conference then adjourned to half-past three o'clock.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

After some explanatory conversation, Dr. Peck and Dr. Elliott were placed on the committee on the Protest of the southern conferences, *vice* Mr. Hamline, elected to the episcopacy, and Dr. Olin, gone home.

The report of the committee of nine was then taken up, and adopted as far as section nine.

On section ten being read, Mr. Randall moved an amendment to the effect that the Church in the south should have a common right to use the copy-right of any works in the possession of the conference at the time of the settlement of the pecuniary affairs by the commissioners. Adopted.

Dr. Durbin.—He had been labouring under a misapprehension in the matter of this report. He had understood that this action was to commence in the south, if, after the southern brethren returned home, they found it necessary. But, by the resolution, it was contemplated to begin this action next week at the New-York Annual Conference. This had its disadvantages. The leading conferences would have to decide under the existing state of excitement; and then it was possible, when the brethren returned to their people, they might find this arrangement unnecessary. He would amend so as to commence this action at the south. There might be difficulties at present in getting the requisite number of votes; but when the south had taken action, and thus proved its necessity, there would be additional reason for the brethren in the north being in favour of it. He would substitute New-Jersey Conference for New-York.

Dr. Paine said, the brother must have greatly misunderstood him if such was the impression he had received from his speech, or else he said what he did not design to say. He said that the subject would go round before it came to the south. If this amendment were adopted, it would be twelve months before it was laid before all the annual conferences, and at least twelve months more before it was settled. Whereas, if it began at once, in twelve months' time they should know whether they had leave peacefully to separate. He hoped it would not be postponed. The matter had been well considered in committee, where all interests had been adequately represented.

Dr. Capers said he appreciated Dr. Durbin's object and motives, and wished that the Church at home was as calm as the doctor seemed to apprehend; but it would at once be seen by brethren that this was a compromise measure, designed to effect that peaceably which otherwise he feared would be done violently. Every mail increased the apprehension of the southern brethren. If the General Conference would put their plan into such operation as would show that they meditated action upon the subject, it would materially tend to measures of peace and tranquillity. The brethren did not know the state of things in the south. He should feel thankful to God if that portion of the Church could be by any means preserved from violent disruption. The southern brethren had, he knew, taxed the charity of the brethren composing that conference in their statements relative to their position with their people. It was thought they spoke without calmness and deliberation. The truth, however, was that they stood like men at the death. If the conference suspended action too long, it would come too late, and would not save them. O that they could pour some oil on the troubled feelings of the south! O that they could cause these waves to be still! He knew of nothing so likely to do this as the passage, cordially and as brethren, of the resolution now before them.

Mr. Ruter, appreciating the feelings of the south, wished to amend the amendment, by substituting the Kentucky Conference for the New-Jersey Conference, which he understood to be the first conference in the south.

Dr. Winans gave the history of the matter in committee. It would be observed that there was only one provision of the whole report that went to the annual conferences; and that merely authorized the appropriation of the proceeds of the Book Concern otherwise than as now appropriated. They were not sending round to the annual conferences any proposition in which the action of the south in reference to the separation was concerned. The only proposition was that they might have liberty, if necessary, to organize a separate conference; and it was important that the south should know, at an early period, that they had such liberty in order to allay the intense excitement which prevailed in that portion of the work.

Dr. Durbin, at this stage of the proceedings, withdrew his amendment.

Dr. Luckey then moved to strike out "New-York."

Mr. Hamline would state the views of the committee on the subject. They had carefully avoided presenting any resolution which would embrace the idea of a separation or division. The article which was referred to the annual conferences had not necessarily any connection with division. It was thought, as complaints were abroad respecting the present mode of appropriating the proceeds of the Book Concern, it would be for the general good that the power to appropriate such proceeds should be put in the power of a two-thirds vote, instead of in the power of a mere majority, thus making it more difficult to make a wrong appropriation. And the occasion of this report was taken hold of by the committee to make it more difficult to misappropriate the funds, in which they believed they should serve both the particular object of the report and the general good of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. M'Ferrin presumed that there were none there who would withhold from the south their share in the Book Concern; and he, therefore, could not see what harm there could be in passing this resolution, which he believed would go through the annual conferences almost without a dissentient voice. And if, after it came round to the south, they saw it unnecessary to organize a separate conference, why then no mischief would have been done. And as it could do the north no harm, but must and would do the south great good, he did hope there would be no opposition to it.

Mr. Coleman supported the amendment.

Mr. Filmore said he was not prepared to stand there and say what his conference would do with the resolutions when they came before it, but he was quite sure his conference would do what was just and honest toward their brethren. He would further remark that the views of the committee had been fully and clearly explained. Their design was to put a restriction upon the General Conference, and to make a two-thirds vote necessary to all appropriations of the produce of the Book Concern, instead of a majority only. The whole of the southern delegates who had spoken at all had declared it to be their honest conviction that the cause of God required immediate action on the part of the north; and if they were convinced that immediate action would relieve the south, they all went for relief.

Mr. Drake opposed the amendment.

The original resolution was then adopted.

Dr. Bangs moved that the blank in the seventh resolution be filled. Adopted.

Dr. Bangs, Dr. Peck, and Mr. Finley were appointed as the commissioners on the part of the General Conference, and the report was adopted.

MONDAY, JUNE 10.

Editor of Sunday-School Books.

The report of the Committee on Sabbath schools was called up, and gave rise to some discussion.

A resolution was passed some days ago, on the recommendation of the Sunday-school Committee, providing an editor for the Sunday-school department exclusively. An opposition was now made by Mr Collins to the appointment of such editor, and supported by several of the members.

Dr. Peck deemed it of great importance to the sabbath-school interest in the Methodist Episcopal Church that such an editor should be appointed. It was a matter of deep regret, and had often been a subject of loud and just complaint, that our list of sabbath-school books, both as to numbers and quality, was entirely below the wants of our schools, and quite inferior to that of some other denominations. Our sabbath-school literature must be greatly elevated or our schools will go elsewhere for supplies. Is this desirable? Must we see this great interest in our Church either entirely crippled or principally dependant upon the American Sunday-School Union for books? It is a great interest, inferior to no other in point of importance, excepting, perhaps, the missionary cause. And to give efficiency to our Union, as able and learned an editor as we can lay our hands upon should be selected, who should give his entire time to the work of editing the Sunday-School Advocate and enlarging the catalogue of books. This measure had been strongly recommended by both the Board of Managers of the Union and the convention held in this city during the present session of the conference, and the report of the able committee appointed by this body had agreed in the recommendation and supported the measure by cogent reasons. That report passed without opposition, when the argument was fresh in the mind of the conference, and now, it seems, we are to retrace our steps! Sir, I hope we shall have the editor, and if we make a wise selection, I doubt not but time will prove the wisdom of the measure. This is not an interest to be put into hands which are already fully employed. The labour which must be done in the Sunday-school department, to meet the exigencies of the age, is full labour for a strong man. In this opinion I am sorry to differ from those whose judgment I highly respect. But my views have not been hastily formed. I have studied the subject, and the more I think, and the more I hear in relation to it, increases the strength of my convictions in favour of the wisdom of the measure proposed by the committee, and already adopted by this body. I hope, sir, we shall not go back.

Mr. Fitch Reed and Mr. Early strongly pressed the absolute necessity of such an appointment, and of a general improvement in our Sunday-school literature, as several schools were compelled, after exhausting our catalogue, to go to other denominations for books.

Mr. Collins pressed his opposition, on the authority of Dr. Bond and Mr. Sandford, both of whom said the office was unnecessary.

Mr. Crowder was in favour, and a motion that had been made by Mr. Green, to reconsider the vote appointing such editor, was laid on the table.

Mr. Green then moved the reconsideration of the vote appointing an assistant editor to the New-York Christian Advocate and Journal, with a view, it was understood, to give the Sunday-school department to Mr. Coles.

Dr. Bangs was in favour of the reconsideration. He thought an assistant editor to a weekly paper quite unnecessary.

Dr. Bond explained the duties of each editorial department, and said it was impossible for one editor alone to conduct that paper successfully. But the assistant editor might also attend to the Sunday-school department, and any deficiency in that department was not the fault of Mr. Coles and himself, who had neglected no manuscript that had been sent to them. But they had not understood that they were to provide original matter. He would take upon himself to say that the Sunday-School Advocate was the best paper of the kind in the United States, and he would say it freely, because the credit was not due to himself. To take away one of the editors of the New-York Christian Advocate and Journal would be to

place it in great jeopardy. The senior editor had to supply the editorials, to read a great part of the manuscripts, not only those which went into the paper, but also those which were rejected, attend to the exchange lists, furnish the foreign and domestic intelligence, &c., &c. Who, then, was to attend to the other matters pertaining to the paper, such as making selections, arranging the articles, abridging the obituary notices, examining the proofs, &c., &c. Still they could do all that was wanted in the way of Sunday-school books.

Dr. Winans thought an assistant editor was necessary. All the great papers had two or more editors. The New-York Christian Advocate and Journal was the leading paper of the connection, and supplied much of the matter for their other papers. It ought to combine extensive information and extensive original views. But he was not opposed to having an editor for the Sunday-school department, though he thought if all the editors did what they ought to do, there were plenty of them.

Dr. Peck said, he would not oppose the proposition to do with one editor for the Advocate provided the editor elected (Dr. Bond) was willing to undertake the whole labour of editing that paper. As to this, the doctor could speak for himself, and what his decision would be was sufficiently evident to his (the speaker's) mind. But he insisted upon the Sunday-school editor—an officer who shall devote his entire time to the Sunday-school department. Brethren speak of the ability of the present number of editors to do all the work; but they, I suppose, are not advised of the fact that the agents have employed a gentleman to manage the Sunday-school department, and that the junior editor of the Advocate has done no more than to exercise a *general* supervision over it for a long time. There has been an editor of Sunday-school books, *in fact*, ever since the Sunday-School Advocate was commenced, and the editors of the Advocate have held little more than a nominal relation to the Sunday-school department. So, sir, all the difference between the old and the new arrangement is, that under the former the agents appointed the editor, but under the latter he will be elected by the General Conference and be directly responsible to that body. I hope the work will not be left to the editors of the Advocate, who can only do it by proxy, as heretofore.

Mr. Early was in favour of reconsideration, and of having only one editor, as with their other Methodist papers.

Dr. Bangs rose and spoke for a few minutes strongly against having an assistant editor, when the hour of adjournment having come, the conference adjourned to half-past three.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Bishop Morris presiding. Mr. Redman moved that the book agent be directed to pay to Wm. Patten the sum of fifteen dollars to defray his expenses while sick. Adopted.

The business before the conference when they adjourned, viz., the dispensing with the assistant editor of the Christian Advocate, was taken up.

Dr. Bangs pursued his remarks, and moved that there be one editor for the Advocate, and one for the Sunday-school books. The conference at length decided to appoint an editor for the Sunday-school department, and Messrs. D. P. Kidder, of New-Jersey, J. Longking, of New-York, J. Kennady, of the Philadelphia Conference, and A. Stevens, of Boston, were put in nomination. Mr. Kidder was elected.

Mr. Wesley's original Rule on Temperance.

Several other resolutions were offered and disposed of. Among them was one recommending that the annual conferences be instructed to take into consideration the propriety of reinstating in the Discipline Mr. Wesley's rule against drunkenness, or buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity. It was adopted—ayes ninety-nine, noes thirty-three.

Mr. Early offered the following resolution:—

“That it requires two-thirds of all the members of the General Conference to alter or recommend a change in the restrictive rules.”

Dr. Peck was aware, as brethren had urged, that the chair (Bishop Andrew) decided in 1840, when the final action was had upon the temperance question, in accordance with the resolution offered by the brother from Virginia; but he never believed in the correctness of that decision. What, sir, do we understand by “the General Conference?” I have always supposed that the constitutional quorum constitutes the General Conference. If this is not what is meant, will brethren tell us what is? If anything more than a quorum is meant by “the General Conference,”

who will undertake to say upon what number of members between a bare quorum and the whole number elected we may fix, and say that number constitutes the General Conference?

Dr. Smith.—All the elected members.

Dr. Peck.—Then I wish the brother to show that any General Conference has ever performed a valid act, for it is doubted whether it can be proved that "all the elected members" of any General Conference were present at any given time. It would be passing strange for a deliberative body to fix a quorum which should be necessary to do business, and the acts of that quorum should, in all cases, be deemed the acts of the body; and yet, where a two-thirds vote of the body was required, the absentees should be counted. There would be the same reason for counting them in every other case, and requiring a majority of all "the elected members" in order to the validity of all acts of the body. This would be a novel arrangement. No, sir, I understand a majority of two-thirds to be a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting. To this result I am conducted by the reason of the thing as well as by parliamentary usage, which, as far as I know, gives the principle of the resolution now pending no support.

The resolution was lost—ayes 50, noes 90.

At the request of Bishop Soule, the following letter, having reference to the Protest of the minority, was read to the conference:—

New-York, June 7, 1844.

Rev. Bishops Soule, Hedding, Waugh, and Morris.

My Dear Brethren,—That part of the *Protest* presented to the General Conference yesterday, which relates to the bishops of the M. E. Church maintaining the *compromise law* of the Discipline, on the subject of *slavery and abolition*, was intended as the *declaration of a principle*, to which it is the purpose of the south to adhere; but was not intended to convey the idea, that any member of the *existing bench of bishops* was in any way delinquent, with regard to the law of the Church in question. If any such impression has been made, in any quarter, it is deeply regretted. It is the opinion of the writer and signers of the *Protest* alluded to, that the bishops addressed in this communication have, at different times, and in different forms, sufficiently *declared* themselves, on the subject under notice, and so far from intending to impugn the bishops, in any way, the minority signing the Protest are ready at all times to endorse the purity and impartiality with which they have maintained and enforced the law and doctrine of the Church, on the subject of slavery and abolition.

In behalf of the southern delegations signing the Protest, very truly and respectfully,

H. B. BASCOM.

The Case of Bishop Andrew resumed.

Dr. Durbin obtained leave to read the following report of the committee appointed to prepare a statement of facts in relation to the action of the conference in Bishop Andrew's case:—

THE REPLY TO THE PROTEST.

The committee appointed to prepare a statement of the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew, and to examine the Protest of the minority, regret that the circumstances under which they have been compelled to act have prevented their preparing so complete a report as the importance of the subject demands. The Protest was not placed under their command until Friday afternoon, and immediately afterward two of the original committee had to withdraw, one of them being ill, and the other having been elected bishop—nor were their places supplied until Saturday evening. It is under these disadvantages, and amid the pressure of important conference business, that they have been required to prepare a document in relation to some of the most important questions that have ever engaged the attention of the Church. It is believed, however, that the following statement of *law* and *facts* will be a sufficient notice of the Protest which has been referred to them.

As the proceedings of the General Conference in the case of Bishop Andrew were not judicial, its decision has gone forth to the public unaccompanied by the reasons and facts upon which this action was founded. This deficiency is but partially supplied by the published reports of the debate on the subject. The speakers who advocated the resolution were restrained by a praiseworthy delicacy from all avoidable allusions which might give pain to the respected individual concerned, or awaken unpleasant emotions in any quarter. It is but natural that under these circumstances some misunderstanding should prevail as to the merits of the case.

The following statement, it is believed, contains nothing, at least so far as facts are concerned, which will not be cheerfully confirmed by all parties, and will throw light upon the true position of the authors of the Protest.

From the first institution of the episcopacy of the M. E. Church no slaveholder has been elected to that dignity, though in several instances candidates otherwise eminently fitted for the station have failed of success solely on account of this impediment. Since the period referred to nine bishops have been elected, who were natives of the United States. Of these only three have been northern men, while six were natives of slaveholding states. Not one, however, was a slaveholder—a remarkable fact, which shows very clearly, that while much more than their just claim has been conceded to the slaveholding portions of the Church, a decided and uniform repugnance has, from the first, been felt and manifested to the occupancy of that high office by a slaveholder.

It is known and acknowledged by all southern brethren that Bishop Andrew was nominated by the delegates from the South Carolina and Georgia Conferences, as a southern candidate for whom northern men might vote, without doing violence to their principles, as he was no slaveholder: Bishop Andrew himself perfectly understood the ground of his election. Since the year 1832 the anti-slavery sentiment in the Church, as well as in the whole civilized world, has constantly and rapidly gained ground, and within the last year or two it has been roused to a special and most earnest opposition to the introduction of a slaveholder into the episcopal office—an event which many were led to fear by certain intimations, published in the Southern Christian Advocate, the Richmond Christian Advocate, and perhaps some other Methodist periodicals. This opposition produced the profoundest anxiety through most of the non-slaveholding conferences. The subject was discussed everywhere, and the dreaded event universally deprecated as the most fearful calamity that ever threatened the Church. Many conferences instructed their delegates to use all possible means to avert such an evil. Other conferences, and many thousand laymen, sent up petitions and memorials to the same effect to the present General Conference. Such was the state of sentiment and of apprehension in the northern portion of the Church, when the delegates to the General Conference learned, on reaching this city, that Bishop Andrew had become a slaveholder. The profound grief, the utter dismay, which was produced by this astounding intelligence can be fully appreciated only by those who have participated in the distressing scenes which have since been enacted in the General Conference.

When the first emotions of surprise and sorrow had so far subsided as to allow of sober thought and inquiry, it was ascertained that Bishop Andrew had been a slaveholder for several years. Soon after his election to the episcopacy, a lady of Augusta bequeathed him a female slave, on condition that she should be sent to Liberia at nineteen years of age, if her consent to emigrate could be obtained—otherwise she was to be made as free as the laws of Georgia would permit. She refused to emigrate, has since married, and is now enjoying all the privileges provided for in the will of her former mistress:—she is, and must be, a slave—she and her children—and liable to all that may befall slaves. Another slave Bishop Andrew has inherited from the mother of his former wife, and by his recent marriage he has become the owner of (it was said on the floor of the General Conference) fourteen or fifteen more. These belonged to Mrs. Andrew in her own right before her marriage. That act, according to the laws of Georgia, made them the property of Bishop Andrew, to keep or dispose of as he pleased. He conveyed them to a trustee, for the joint use of himself and wife, of whom the survivor is to be the sole owner. This conveyance was made for the security of Mrs. Andrew, and with no view either to satisfy or to mislead the opinions of the northern Church. So much, at least, Bishop Andrew was understood to say to the conference. His known integrity forbids the suspicion that he would attempt to disguise the real character of the transaction; and the fact that the earnings of the slaves, as well as the reverend title to them, are his, demonstrates that this arrangement was not made with any view to satisfy the well-known sentiments of the Church against a slaveholding bishop. It is manifest from this statement, which is believed to be strictly correct, that Bishop Andrew's connection with slavery is—not as the Protest intimates, merely an "assumption," but that he is the owner of slaves, in the full and proper sense of that term. His title was acquired by bequest, by inheritance, and by marriage, which are by far the most common grounds of ownership in slaves. All the usual and necessary conditions of slavery have their fulfilment in the relation of these persons to Bishop Andrew. Their labour and their earnings are sub-

ject to his control, and inure to his benefit and that of his family. They are now liable, or they may be hereafter, to be sold; they and their offspring are doomed, as the case now stands, to a bondage that is perpetual, and they are liable and likely to descend to his heirs. Beyond all reasonable doubt, the condition of Bishop Andrew's slaves will be attended, while he lives, with all the alleviations—and these are many and great—which a very benevolent and Christian master can provide. Still it must be slavery. In the view of the law of the land, and of the law of the Discipline, in all its more weighty and permanent consequences to the bondman, it is and must be slavery. It was said repeatedly on the floor of the conference, that the deed of trust had put it quite beyond Bishop Andrew's power to free his slaves, even if there were no other obstacle. So then, should the stringent laws of Georgia against emancipation be relaxed or repealed by her next legislature, the rule of the Discipline, which would then become imperative on Bishop Andrew, could not, and would not, be satisfied, and the Church must still have a slaveholding bishop, in spite, not only of its known will, but of its standing laws.

It was the almost unanimous opinion of the delegates, from the non-slaveholding conferences that Bishop Andrew could not continue to exercise his episcopal functions under existing circumstances, without producing results extensively disastrous to the Church in the north; and from this opinion the brethren of the south did not dissent. For a while the hope was entertained that the difficulty would be quietly removed by his resigning his office, which it was known he had previously desired to do. But this hope was dissipated by the intelligence that the delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states had been convened, and that they had unanimously advised him not to resign. Various efforts were then made in private to devise some method to relieve the case, but they all proved abortive, and nothing remained but that it must come before the General Conference. The bishops themselves, in their united Address to the conference, had urged it to ascertain whether there had been any departure from the essential principles "of the general itinerant superintendency," and had declared of that superintendency that "the plan of its operation is *general, embracing the whole work in connectional order, and not diocesan, or sectional*. Consequently any division of the work into districts, or otherwise, so as to create a particular charge, with any other view, or in any order, than as a prudential measure to secure to all the conferences the annual visits of the superintendents, would be an innovation on the system"—that "*our superintendency must be itinerant, and not local*:"—that "it was wisely provided in the system of Methodism, from its very foundation, that it should be the duty of the superintendents '*to travel through the connection at large*.'" The question then presented itself, how the case of Bishop Andrew could be so disposed of as to preserve this itinerant general superintendency? If the General Conference had even been disposed to evade it, the consideration of it was forced upon them by the episcopal Address itself.

A diversity of sentiment existed as to the proper method of treating the case.

Some, at least, believed—perhaps few doubted, that sufficient ground existed for impeachment on a charge of "improper conduct" under the express provisions of the Discipline. The opinion was certainly entertained in several quarters that it was "improper" for the shepherd and bishop of eleven hundred thousand souls either deliberately or heedlessly to place himself in direct and irreconcilable conflict with the known and cherished moral sentiments of a large majority of his vast flock. Such, however, was the prevalence of moderate counsels, that no proposal was made either to impeach or punish, and such the controlling influence of forbearance and kindness, that it is believed not one word was uttered during the entire debate of nearly a fortnight derogatory to the character, or justly offensive to the feelings, of Bishop Andrew. The transaction which had brought such distress upon the Church, and threatened such extensive ruin, was dealt with merely as a fact—as a practical difficulty—for the removal or palliation of which it was the duty of the General Conference to provide. It was in this spirit, and for such ends, that the following preamble and resolution were passed:—

"Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency, and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which in the estimation of the General Conference will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains. J. B. FINLEY,
J. M. TRIMBLE."

The action of the General Conference was neither judicial nor punitive. It neither achieves nor intends a deposition, nor so much as a legal suspension. Bishop Andrew is still a bishop; and should he, against the expressed sense of the General Conference, proceed in the discharge of his functions, his official acts would be valid.

Such are the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew. We now proceed to notice the law. Nearly all the objections raised in the Protest against the action of the General Conference may be reduced to two, viz., that that body has violated the *constitutional* and the *statutory* law of the Church. That it has violated the constitutional law the Protest attempts to prove by representing its late action as a breach of what it calls "the compromise law of the Church on the subject of slavery;" meaning, as is supposed, the section on slavery, particularly that paragraph which relates to travelling preachers. The entire language on this subject is evidently formed so as to make the impression on any reader not intimately acquainted with the history and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that there has been some period (whether 1804 or 1816 does not clearly appear from the Protest) when the question of slavery was settled in the Methodist Episcopal Church as it was in the general government at the adoption of the federal constitution,—that "the confederating annual conferences," "after a vexed and protracted negotiation," met in convention, and the section on slavery "was finally agreed to by the parties after a long and fearful struggle," as "a compact," "a treaty," which cannot be altered by the General Conference until certain constitutional restrictions are removed. So that now any interference on the part of that body with the question of slavery in the southern conferences is as unconstitutional as it is admitted would be the interference of the general government with the question in the southern states.

After the boldness with which this doctrine is advanced, and the confidence with which it is relied upon as "the first and principal ground occupied by the minority in this Protest," it will be difficult for the uninitiated to believe, that it is as unfounded in fact as it is ingenious in its "legal casuistry." It is indeed true, that the question of slavery had been long and anxiously agitated in the Church, and the various General Conferences had endeavoured to adjust the matter so as to promote the greatest good of all parties; but this very fact goes to disprove the position assumed in the Protest: for as the attention of the Church had been thus strongly called to the subject, if it had been the intention to guard the question of slavery by constitutional provisions, it would have been done when the Church actually did meet to frame a constitution. But nothing of the kind appears. For when, in 1808, it was resolved that the General Conference instead of consisting, as before, of all the travelling elders, should be a delegated body, and when it was determined that that body (unlike the general government, which has no powers but such as are expressly conferred) should have all powers but such as are expressly taken away,—when this vast authority was about to be given to the General Conference, among "the limitations and restrictions" imposed, *there is not one word on the subject of slavery; nor was any attempt made to introduce any such restriction.* The only provision anywhere established by that General Conference of constitutional force, was the general rule forbidding the buying and selling of human beings with an intention to enslave them. So that, in direct opposition to the assertion of the Protest, we maintain that the section on slavery is "a mere legislative enactment, a simple decree of a General Conference," as much under its control as any other portion of the Discipline not covered by the restrictive rules. If additional proof of the truth of this position were needed it might be adduced in the fact that that section which the Protest represents to have been settled in 1804, was not only altered at the General Conference or convention of 1808, but also at the delegated General Conferences of 1812, 1816, 1820, and 1824. And although the Protest speaks of it as "*usually known*" by the name of "the compromise act," the greater part of this General Conference have never heard either that appellation or that character ascribed to it until the present occasion.

But although this General Conference cannot admit that any portion of the section on slavery is constitutional in its character, and therefore could not under any circumstances allow the imputation of the Protest that they have violated the constitution of the Church, yet they do admit that it is *law*—law too which the Gen-

eral Conference (though possessing full powers in the premises) has never altered except at the above periods, and then, in each instance, for the further indulgence of the south. The question then comes up, whether this General Conference, as the Protest maintains, has in effect suddenly reversed the legislation of the Church, not indeed by altering the law, but by practically disregarding it. The portion of the law particularly in question is the following paragraph:—

“When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.”

This it is alleged fully covers the case of Bishop Andrew, and therefore he ought to have been left in the quiet and unquestioned enjoyment of his rights. Were it even true, that proceedings, either judicial or “extra-judicial,” have been had in his case, we should not hesitate to join issue here, and maintain that this law does not protect him. The Protest asks, “Is there anything in the law or its reasons creating an exception in the instance of bishops?” We answer, There is in both. So far as judicial proceedings are concerned, the Discipline divides the Church into four classes, private members, local preachers, travelling preachers, and bishops; and establishes distinct tribunals, and different degrees of responsibility for each. The section on slavery applies only to officers of the Church, and therefore private members are not named at all, but special provision is made in the case of local and travelling preachers. How happens it that bishops are not named at all? Are they necessarily included in the title “travelling preachers?” In common parlance they may sometimes be thus designated, but in the Discipline it is not so understood, even in regard to matters much less important than this, in evidence of which we need only advert to the fact, that the General Conference of 1836 did not consider that the allowance of bishops was provided for under the general title of “travelling preachers,” and they therefore inserted them accordingly. To explain why no mention is made of “bishops,” it is not necessary, as the Protest supposes, “to slander the virtuous dead of the north,” as if they excluded them intentionally “by a resort to deceptive and dishonourable means.” It is a much more natural and reasonable explanation, that at that day, when the Church could hardly tolerate slavery in any class of the ministry, “the virtuous dead” both of the north and of the south did not dream that it would ever find its way into the episcopacy.

But though the *language* of the law does not include bishops, yet if the “reason” and spirit of it did, we might be disposed to allow them the benefit of it. But this is not the case. The whole tenor of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church is adverse to slavery. Even the Protest has admitted (irreconcilable as the admission is with another portion of the same instrument) that, at the time of the alleged “compact,” “the whole Church, by common consent, united in proper effort for the *mitigation and final removal* of the evil of slavery.” But let the Discipline speak for itself. The mildest form in which the question at the head of the section on slavery has ever been expressed, is the present, namely, “What shall be done for the *extirpation* of the evil of slavery?” And the very conference of 1804, which enacted the so called “compromise law,” as well as that of 1800, when the paragraph relating to travelling preachers was really adopted, were each convened under a request from the preceding General Conference, that the whole Church would aid that body in obtaining “full light in order to take further steps toward the *eradicating this enormous evil* from that part of the Church of God to which they are united.” It is obvious, therefore, that connection with slavery is tolerated no further than seems necessary. In the case of ordinary travelling preachers there appeared to be a necessity for some indulgence. They might become owners of slaves in the providence of God, the laws of the states might not allow emancipation; and they had no power to choose their own place of residence. But no such “reason” could apply to a bishop, for he has always been allowed to live where he pleases. Again: travelling preachers encumbered with slaves labour among people similarly situated, and who would not, therefore, be likely to object to them on that account. But a bishop, by the *constitution* of the Church, is required to labour in every part of the connection; and in by far the larger portion of it the services of a slaveholding bishop would not be acceptable. So here again the “reason” of the case does not apply to a bishop. There is not, therefore, as the Protest so roundly asserts, any “express” or “specific law” in the case; and therefore, as the Protest itself admits, “in the absence of law it might be com-

petent for the General Conference to act on other grounds." With the failure to prove any "specific law" authorizing a bishop to hold slave property, the third and fourth arguments of the Protest, which are founded on this assumption, fail also.

But, perhaps, it is not so much the law of the Discipline which the Protest claims to cover Bishop Andrew as the law of the land. For it declares, "The rights of the legal owners of slaves in all the slaveholding states are guaranteed by the constitution of the United States, and by the local constitutions of the states respectively, as the supreme law of the land, to which every minister and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the limits of the United States government, professes subjection, and pledges himself to submit, as an article of the Christian faith, in the common creed of the Church." If by this is meant that the law of the land *allows* citizens to hold slaves, it is admitted. But so also it allows them to keep theatres and grog-shops, so that this is no ground of argument. But if it mean that the law of the land *requires* citizens to keep slaves, (the only interpretation which can make the argument available,) it is denied. And until it can be shown that the Methodist Episcopal Church by its action, legislative, judicial, or executive, requires any citizen to do what the law of the land requires him not to do, it is unjust to attempt to get up popular clamour against it, as if it came in conflict with the civil authority.

This course of reasoning has been pursued thus far, not so much because it was deemed necessary for the vindication of the conference, as to avoid sanctioning, by silence, the erroneous exposition which the Protest presents of the constitution, and the law of the Church. For it has been already seen that Bishop Andrew has been subjected to no trial, and no penalty has been inflicted. At present, it is plain that the conference has done nothing to depose, or even suspend Bishop Andrew. His name will appear in official publications with those of the other bishops, and with them he will derive his support from the funds of the Church. In order to make out that the General Conference had no right to take such action as they have in Bishop Andrew's case, the authors of the Protest have been driven to the necessity of claiming for the Methodist episcopacy powers and prerogatives never advanced before, except by those who wished to make it odious, and which have always been repudiated by its chosen champions. The Protest maintains that "the episcopacy is a co-ordinate branch of the government;" for which no argument is adduced save this—that it is, in general, the province of bishops to ordain bishops. A sufficient answer to which may be found in the principle of Methodist polity, stated in the Address of the Bishops to the present General Conference, that orders (the principle applies to bishops, though not expressly named, as well as to elders and deacons) are "conferred" by the election, and only "confirmed" by the ordination: and that when the election has been made, the bishop "has no discretionary authority; but is under *obligation* to ordain the person elected, whatever may be his own judgment of his qualifications." And if all the bishops should refuse to ordain the person elected by the General Conference, that body would unquestionably have the right to appoint any three elders to ordain him, as is provided "in case there be no bishop remaining in our Church." The Protest declares that "the bishops are beyond doubt an integral, constituent part of the General Conference, made such by law and the constitution." If the words "General Conference" be not a mere clerical error, the assertion is sufficiently refuted by the answer in the Discipline to the question, "Who shall compose the General Conference?" and by the practice of the bishops themselves, who disclaim a right to give even a casting vote, or even to speak in General Conference, except by permission. The Protest maintains, that "in a sense, by no means unimportant, the General Conference is as much the *creature* of the episcopacy, as the bishops are the creatures of the General Conference." The proof adduced for which is, that "constitutionally the bishops alone have the right to fix the time of holding the annual conferences; and should they refuse, or neglect to do so, no annual conference could meet according to law; and, by consequence, no delegates could be chosen, and no General Conference could be chosen, or even exist." That is to say, because, for the convenience of the bishops in performing their tour, they are allowed to say *at what time in the year* an annual conference shall meet; therefore they have the power to prevent such body from meeting at all, though, from its very name, it must meet once a year!—that, by preventing the meeting of annual conferences, they might prevent the organization of any General Conference; and thus, escaping all accountability for their delinquencies, might continue to lord it over God's heritage, until themselves and the Church should die a natural death.

We can easily perceive, were this reasoning legitimate, that the bishops might *destroy*, not only the General Conference, but the Church; but are at a loss to discover how it proves that they can *create* either. We must protest against having any argument of ours adduced as analogous to this.

The Protest maintains, that "the General Conference has no right, power, or authority, ministerial, judicial, or administrative," in any way to subject a bishop "to any official disability whatever, without the formal presentation of a charge or charges, alleging that the bishop to be dealt with has been guilty of the violation of some law, or at least some disciplinary obligation of the Church, and also upon conviction of such charge, after due form of trial." To those who are not familiar with the Methodist economy, this might seem plausible. But it is, in reality, an attempt to except, from the action of a general system, those who, least of all, ought to be excepted. The cardinal feature of our polity is the itinerancy.

To sustain this system, it is essential that the classes should receive the leaders that are appointed by the preacher, that the societies should receive the preachers that are stationed over them by the bishops, that the annual conferences should receive the bishops that are sent to them by the General Conference. Unless, therefore, the utmost care be taken by those who have authority in the premises, that these parties shall severally be acceptable to those among whom they labour, there is great danger that those who are injured by such neglect may seek redress by revolutionary measures. For this reason, the officers of the Methodist Church are subjected regularly to an examination unknown, it is believed, among other denominations. Not only is provision made for formal trials, in cases of crimes and misdemeanours, but there is a special arrangement for the correction of other obstructions to official usefulness. At every annual conference the character of every travelling preacher is examined; at every General Conference that of every bishop. And the object is to ascertain not merely whether there is ground for the formal presentation of charges, with a view to a regular trial; but whether there is any "objection"—anything that might interfere with the acceptance of the officer in question among his charge. And it is doctrine novel and dangerous in the Methodist Church, that such difficulties cannot be corrected unless the person objected to be formally arraigned under some specific law, to be found in the concise code of the Discipline—doctrine not the less dangerous, because it is applied where "objections," unimportant in others, might be productive of the most disastrous consequences. Will the Methodist Church sanction the doctrine that, while all its other officers, of whatever name or degree, are subjected to a sleepless supervision; are counselled, admonished, or changed, "as necessity may require, and as the Discipline directs," a bishop, who decides all questions of law in annual conferences; who, of his mere motion and will, controls the work and the destiny of four thousand ministers; who appoints and changes at pleasure the spiritual guides of four millions of souls; that the depositary of these vast powers, whose slightest indiscretions or omissions are likely to disturb the harmony, and even impair the efficiency of our mighty system of operations, enjoys a virtual impunity for all delinquencies or misdoings not strictly criminal?

It is believed that an attempt to establish such an episcopal supremacy would fill not only a part, but the whole of the Church "with alarm and dismay." But this doctrine is not more at variance with the genius of Methodism than it is with the express language of the Discipline, and the exposition of it by all our standard writers. The constitution of the Church provides that "the General Conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church," under six "limitations and restrictions," among which the only one relating to the episcopacy is this—"They shall not change or alter any part, or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." As there is nothing in the restrictive rules to limit the full powers of the General Conference, in the premises, so is there nothing in the special provision respecting the responsibility of a bishop. In reply to the question, "To whom is a bishop amenable for his conduct?" the Discipline declares, "To the General Conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary." And this, be it remembered, is all that is said respecting the jurisdiction over a bishop, with the exception of a rule for his trial, in the interval of a General Conference, if he be guilty of immorality. In full accordance with the plain meaning of these provisions is the language of all the standard writers on Methodist polity.

Bishop Emory—a man of whom it is no injustice to the living or the dead to say,

that he was a chief ornament and light of our episcopacy; that he brought to the investigation of all ecclesiastical subjects a cool, sagacious, powerful, practical intellect—fully sustains the positions we have assumed in behalf of the powers of the General Conference over the bishops of our Church. He gives an unqualified assent to the following passages from the notes to the Discipline, prepared by Bishops Asbury and Coke, at the request of the General Conference:—"They (our bishops) are entirely dependant on the General Conference:" "their power, their usefulness, themselves, are entirely at the mercy of the General Conference."

Dr. Emory also quotes some passages from a pamphlet, by the Rev. John Dickens, which, he says, was published by the unanimous request of the Philadelphia Conference, and may be considered as expressing the views both of that conference and of Bishop Asbury, his intimate friend. Mr. Dickens affirms, that the bishops derive their power from the election of the General Conference, and not from their ordination; and that the conference has, on that ground, power to remove Bishop Asbury, and appoint another, "if they see it necessary." He affirms that Bishop Asbury "derived his official power from the conference, and therefore his office is at their disposal"—Mr. Asbury was "responsible to the General Conference, who had power to remove him, if they saw it necessary;" "he is liable every year to be removed."

The above quotations show very clearly the sentiments of Asbury, and Coke, and Dickens, on this question—men chiefly instrumental in laying the foundations of our polity.

Equally clear and satisfactory is the testimony of another venerable bishop, who still lives, in the full exercise of his mental powers and benignant influence, to guide and bless the Church:—"The superintendents now have no power in the Church above that of elders, except what is connected with presiding in the conference, fixing the appointments of the preachers, and ordaining:"—"They are the servants of the elders, and go out and execute their commands;"—"The General Conference may expel a bishop not only for immoral, but for *'improper conduct,'* which means a small offence below a crime; for which not even a child or a slave can be expelled but after repeated admonitions:"—"The travelling preachers gave the bishop his power, they continue it in his hands, and they can reduce, limit, or transfer it to other hands, whenever they see cause." Such is the language of Bishop Hedding, who only concurs in the moderate, truly Methodist views of Bishops Asbury, Coke, and Emory.

It is believed that this statement of the facts and the law in the case, will afford a satisfactory answer to all the positions and reasonings of the Protest; and, after having thus presented it, the majority are perfectly willing to abide "the decision of our contemporaries, and of posterity." They cannot, however, close these remarks, without expressing their regret that the minority, not content with protesting against the action of the General Conference, as "lawless," as "without law, and contrary to law," as such "a violation of the compromise law," that "the public faith of this body can no longer be relied upon as the guarantee for the redemption of the pledge," "that there shall be no further curtailment of right as regards *the southern ministry,*,"—that, not content with thus harshly assailing the proceedings of the General Conference, they have even refused to the bishops, whom they have invested with such exalted prerogatives, the quiet possession of their thoughts and feelings; and have thrown out the significant intimation, "that any bishop of the Church, either violating or submitting to the violation of the compromise charter of union between the north and south, without proper and public remonstrance, cannot be acceptable in the south, and *need not appear there.*" We shall be slow to believe, that even their constituents will justify them in thus virtually deposing, not one bishop only, but several, by a process which is even worse than "extra-judicial."

When all the law, and the facts in the case, shall have been spread before an impartial community, the majority have no doubt that they will fix "*the responsibility of division,*" should such an unhappy event take place, "where in justice it belongs." They will ask, Who first introduced slavery into the episcopacy? And the answer will be, *Not the General Conference.* Who opposed the attempt to withdraw it from the episcopacy? *Not the General Conference.* Who resisted the measure of peace that was proposed—the mildest that the case allowed? *Not the majority.* Who first sounded the knell of division, and declared that it would be impossible longer to remain under the jurisdiction of the M. E. Church? *Not the majority.*

The proposition for a peaceful separation, (if any must take place,) with which the Protest closes, though strangely at variance with much that precedes, has already been met by the General Conference. And the readiness with which that body (by a vote which would doubtless have been unanimous but for the belief that some entertained of the unconstitutionality of the measure) granted all that the southern brethren themselves could ask, in such an event, must for ever stand as a practical refutation of any assertion that the minority have been subjected to the tyranny of a majority.

Finally, we cannot but hope that the minority, after reviewing the entire action of the conference, will find that, both in their Declaration and their Protest, they have taken too strong a view of the case; and that by presenting it in its true light before their people, they may be able to check any feelings of discord that may have arisen, so that the Methodist Episcopal Church may still continue as one body, engaged in its proper work of "spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands."

J. P. DURBIN, *Chairman.*

GEORGE PECK,

CHARLES ELLIOTT.

EVENING SESSION.

Bishop Waugh presiding.

The report of Dr. Durbin, which was under consideration when conference adjourned, was taken up, and a motion for its adoption made.

Mr. Crowder could not let that motion pass without expressing his sentiments on the subject. As the matter stood before that report was brought in, he had hoped they might yet avoid division. The passage of that report would render division inevitable. They had no choice left. And there were statements in that report which were contrary to fact. Before that hour he had never heard that the characters of class-leaders were examined into at the quarterly conferences. There were statements also in reference to Bishop Andrew which had never been made known to the conference before; and on the general question of the connection of slavery with the M. E. Church there were positions taken by that report, to the truth of which he could not subscribe. The document he could not but regard as an insult to the whole south. Mr. C. then repeated, with much earnestness and warmth, his convictions as to the evil and disastrous consequences that would result from the publication of such a document by the General Conference, and declared he should not be surprised at its leading to a civil war, so utterly did it deny the rights and trample upon the feelings of all the slaveholding states.

Mr. Early begged the brethren not hastily to adopt this report. Some thought his brother from Virginia was excited; for himself he was calm and collected, but he never had such sad and fearful forebodings as he had experienced since he came into that evening session. He denounced, as a thing unheard of before in the M. E. Church, the examination into the character of a class-leader at the quarterly conference. Already the south was in a flame in consequence of the past action of that conference; and this reply to the Protest was calculated more than anything to increase the dissatisfaction of the southern Churches. He denied the right of a majority to take such a course. The eyes of the brethren had never fallen upon a page where the protest of a minority was so treated. And the report misstated facts. Three doctors of the M. E. Church came before the world, and proclaimed that the characters of class-leaders were examined into by the quarterly conferences! He never heard such a statement before.

Hitherto things had gone on as pleasantly as they could expect, except the exhibition in the election of the editor of the Richmond Christian Advocate, which might be fun to the north, but to the south was death. After all it was said to be founded only in a little mischief. He should have been rejoiced to have gone home prepared to say that the brethren down east, and those of similar sentiment, had, by common consent, agreed to a peaceable division of the Church; and that, being free from this difficulty of slavery themselves, they were prepared to aid the south in any measure which would relieve them from their difficulties; and that thus they should remain members of one family, and love as brethren. Yet the south was in a high state of excitement. He (the speaker) had now in his pocket a letter from one of the first merchants in Richmond, mentioning the fact, that the excitement was such that the most influential men in the city declared, in the public market, that if those men who had denounced Bishop Andrew and the south were to visit that city it would be impossible to secure them safety from

the indignation of the people. A mass meeting had been held, and it was said that when gentlemen applied for admission they were refused on the ground that it was a meeting of the society alone. Let that report go forth as it was, and he could tell the two doctors, and the president of one of their universities, that they had sounded the death-knell of the union of the Church! Adopt it, and enter it upon their records, and to all intents and purposes this would be the case. He expected to shake hands with many whom he loved, but with whom he had now met for the last time in General Conference. Let the circumstances connected with the action of the conference in relation to Bishop Andrew go forth with all his heart; but it was unparalleled that such a reply should be made to a simple Protest. What would be thought, if in the Supreme Courts of the United States, or in the courts of England, when one of the judges had entered his protest against any decision, the others should publish a lengthened reply to such a protest?

Dr. Bangs rose to a point of order. He inquired whether it was in order to debate this matter. The Protest was allowed to go quietly upon the records.

Bishop Waugh reminded him that a motion was made for spreading it upon the journals.

Dr. Longstreet said the difference in the two cases was obvious. It was the right of the minority, which the majority could not control, to place their Protest upon the journals. It was not the right of the conference to appoint a committee to reply to the Protest.

Dr. Peck wished to make an explanation which would relieve the difficulty.

Dr. Longstreet did not mean to make an elaborate speech, but to state some facts that ought to go forth to the world in connection with these extraordinary proceedings. Some of the facts connected with the case the committee had either forgotten to state, or had stated in such a way that they would make a false impression. The first question was, What was the report designed for? There could be but one of two interpretations put upon it. Either it was designed to convict Bishop Andrew of duplicity, or to present to the public the grounds on which the decision of the conference had been made. And he would ask whether it was fair, equitable, or just, to argue for twelve days on one state of facts, and then, after their decision was made, to bring in a report on another? All these legal inferences they had nothing to do with. They must take the statement of Bishop Andrew, remembering, too, that he had solemnly declared before them that he could not, in his conscience, deprive his wife of her property, simply because he had married her. Suppose all the things which they pretended to have found out since were true, and that Bishop Andrew was the owner of the slaves, would it be fair to bring that matter in now? It was not once said, in all that report, that he could emancipate them. He boldly asserted that Bishop Andrew did not own the slaves. If he should get in debt, they might possibly be taken for his debts, and that was suggested to him; but there is no fear on that point, for he did not intend to go in debt. But it was not true that the slaves belong to him. How far his creditors might assert a claim to them, might be a grave question; but as between his children and his wife, in case of his death, he maintained that they would go to her, and not to his children. If he had violated their discipline, they were bound to dismiss him. But he had not done so, and they had not attempted to prove that he had.

Dr. Smith said that creditors in Georgia had peculiar claims over and above children and heirs.

Dr. Elliott thought the course proposed by the committee was agreeable to the strictest rules. The minority had a right to present their Protest without debate, and the majority had an equal right to present their reply to that Protest without debate.

Dr. Smith called for a case in proof.

Mr. Collins said the report was not a protest, but necessarily a document coming from a committee.

Mr. Slicer inquired whether it was in order to insert and print a document before it was adopted.

Bishop Waugh thought the conference had a right to their own judgment. They might decline to adopt, but might wish to spread it on the journals, and present it before the public.

Mr. Ames also defended the report, on the ground that other ecclesiastical tribunals pursued the same course the conference were following in this case, and which they ought to have adopted in former actions of theirs on individual cases.

Dr. Durbin said the committee did not look upon the Protest of the minority *as*

a Protest, but as an elaborate argumentation of the case; and they thought that a minority had no right to an argumentation in their Protest. In this he spoke the sentiments of his former colleagues in committee, Dr. Olin and Mr. Hamline. They also thought the majority expected them to reply to it. He and his present colleagues would, however, consent to the omission from their report of some of its features, which had been strongly objected to. One was an assertion, which the opposition had pointed out as unheard of before on the conference floor, that the character of class-leaders was examined in the quarterly conference; and the other a supposititious case, as to Bishop Andrew being called up at the next General Conference, if he continued to exercise his functions. He never dreamed of such a thing as that the majority would adopt the report, but that they would place it on the journal by the side of the Protest, without debate. He did not think that the Protest would go out to the world, and he was sorry that it had ever been put in print. If it had not been published, then there would have been no necessity for printing this reply.

Dr. Peck said he consented to the erasure of that part of the report relating to the contingency that the bishop might be arraigned before the next General Conference for contravening the expressed will of the present General Conference, not because he relinquished the principle, but because he thought it might perhaps be better to leave it out of the report. He also consented to the alteration of the statement as to class-leaders. Though the spirit of that statement is borne out, at least so far as the argument is concerned, by section 2, chapter 2, part 1 of the Discipline, yet, as its verbiage is somewhat incorrect, he was willing to spare it. The argument was a valid one, and one that no number of "doctors" could easily answer; but the committee were willing to go to all reasonable lengths, in removing those features of the report deemed objectionable.

Dr. Smith said he did not pretend to very accurate information on the subject of the rights of minorities to present their Protests, &c.; but it was the first time in his life that he had heard that the protestants had no right to the arguments on which their Protest was founded. He denied that Dr. Olin, whose literary reputation he felt bound to defend in his absence, could, by any possibility, have uttered the sentiments which Dr. Durbin had attributed to him, in reference to the right of a majority in regard to a Protest. Dr. Durbin must have misunderstood Dr. Olin, because that gentleman had, only a short time before he left, expressed exactly the contrary opinion to him in reference to a Protest he (Dr. Smith) was then preparing. He did so in reply to an inquiry, fully and clearly, and, out of regard to Dr. Olin's reputation, he could not let Dr. Durbin's remarks pass without this reply. He argued that there was no necessity to pass a resolution to enter that paper on the journal; for, the moment the President received that paper, it was to be entered on the journal. There was no need to order it to be printed, for that would be done under a former order of this conference. He contended that the object of the motion was to have the report adopted by this conference. That was what he wanted them to do, for it was what they believed. He wanted them to sign their names to that paper, and let it go out before the world. They had attempted to gull the public long enough, and he now wanted them to show their hands, and tell the five hundred thousand Methodists at the south what they intended to do.

Mr. Perkins here moved the previous question, and Mr. Crowder called for the ayes and noes; and the motion to spread the report on the journal and print it was carried, there being in the affirmative 116, and in the negative 26.

YEAS.

New-York Conference—Bangs, Rice, G. Peck, Stratten, Sandford, F. Reed, Ferguson, Martindale. *Providence*—Lovejoy, Upham, Benton, Townsend. *New-England*—Porter, Pickering. *Maine*—Hill, E. Robinson, Hobart, Nickerson. *New-Hampshire*—E. Scott, Kelley, Perkins, Dow, Cass, Spaulding, Cahoon. *Troy*—Seymour, Weaver, Covell, Spicer, Coleman, Houghtaling, J. T. Peck. *Black River*—A. D. Peck, A. Adams, Baker, Ninde. *Oneida*—Snyder, Comfort, Rounds, Shepherd, Row, Bowen, Holmes. *Genesee*—Filmore, Luckey, Steele, Seager, Abell, Hosmer, Alverson. *Eric*—Steadman, Bain, G. W. Clarke, J. Robinson. *Pittsburg*—W. Hunter, Spencer, S. Elliott, Boyd, Drummond. *Ohio*—C. Elliott, Raper, Sehon, Trimble, Connell. *North Ohio*—E. Thompson, Power, Poe, Yocum, Runnels. *Michigan*—G. Smith, Billings, Baughman. *Indiana*—Simpson, Wiley, Ames, Ruter, Eddy. *Rock River*—Weed, Sinclair, H. W. Reed, Mitchell. *Illinois*—Cartwright, Van Cleve. *Missouri*—J. W. Jameson. *Kentucky*—Bascom, Kava-

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naugh, Crouch, Brush. *Holston*—Sevier, Patten, Stringfield. *Tennessee*—Paine, M'Ferrin. *Arkansas*—Parker, A. Hunter. *Texas*—Fowler. *Mississippi*—Drake, Lane. *Alabama*—Hamilton. *Georgia*—L. Pierce. *Virginia*—W. A. Smith. *South Carolina*—Wightman, Walker. *Baltimore*—Slicer, Griffith, Bear, Morgan, Sargent, Collins, Gere. *Philadelphia*—Durbin, White. *New-Jersey*—Winner, J. S. Porter, Shaw, Neall—116.

NAYS.

New-England Conference—King. *Maine*—Randall, Morse, Webber. *Missouri*—Redman. *Memphis*—Harris, M' Mahon, Joyner. *Arkansas*—Ratcliffe. *Alabama*—Boring, Garrett. *Georgia*—G. F. Pierce, Parks, Glenn, Evans, Longstreet. *South Carolina*—Betts, Dunwoody. *North Carolina*—J. Jamieson, Doub, Blake. *Virginia*—Early, Crowder. *Baltimore*—Hildt. *Philadelphia*—W. Cooper. *New-Jersey*—T. Sovereign—26.

It being now a very late hour in the evening, and the conference anxious to adjourn *sine die*, having been so long absent from their charges and their families, the remainder of the night was taken up by the adoption of reports, and the passage of sundry resolutions.

At a quarter past twelve o'clock, after prayer by Mr. Dunwoody, of South Carolina, the conference adjourned *sine die*.

APPENDIX.

State of the Vote in the Case of Francis A. Harding.

NAYS.

New-York Conference—Rice, Carpenter, G. Peck, Stratten, Sandford, F. Reed, Ferguson, Martindale, Richardson. *Providence*—Lovejoy, Upham, Benton, Townsend. *New-England*—J. Porter, King, Crandall, C. Adams, Pickering. *Maine*—Hill, E. Robinson, Randall, Morse, Hobart, Nickerson, Webber. *New-Hampshire*—E. Scott, Chamberlain, Kelley, Perkins, Spaulding, Cahoon, Cass. *Troy*—Seymour, Wever, Covel, Spicer, Coleman, Houghtaling, J. T. Peck. *Black River*—A. D. Peck, A. Adams, Baker, Ninde. *Oneida*—Snyder, Comfort, Rounds, Shepherd, Row, Bowen, Holmes, jun. *Genesee*—Filmore, Luckey, Steele, Hibbard, Seager, Abel, Hosmer, Alverson. *Erie*—Steadman, Bain, G. W. Clark, J. Robinson, Goodwin. *Pittsburg*—W. Hunter, H. J. Clark, Spencer, S. Elliott, Boyd, Wakefield, Drummond. *Ohio*—C. Elliott, Raper, Sehon, Trimble, Finley, Hamline, Connell, Ferree. *North Ohio*—Thompson, Power, Poe, Yocum, Runnels. *Michigan*—G. Smith, Crane, Billings, Baughman. *Indiana*—Simpson, Wiley, Ames, Miller, Ruter, Wood, Eddy, Havens. *Rock River*—Weed, H. W. Reed, Mitchell. *Illinois*—Cartwright, Van Cleve. *Missouri*—J. M. Jamieson. *Texas*—J. Clark. *Baltimore*—Slicer, Griffith, Bear, Morgan, Tippet, Sargent, Collins, Davis, Gere, Hildt. *Philadelphia*—Durbin, T. J. Thompson. *New-Jersey*—Winner, J. S. Porter, Shaw—117.

YEAS.

Rock River Conference—Sinclair. *Illinois*—Akers, Stamper, N. G. Berryman. *Missouri*—Redman, Patton, J. C. Berryman. *Kentucky*—Bascom, Gunn, Kavanaugh, Stephenson, Crouch, Brush. *Holston*—Sevier, S. Patton, Stringfield. *Tennessee*—M'Ferrin, Green, Madden. *Memphis*—Harris, Moody, M' Mahan, Joyner. *Arkansas*—J. C. Parker, Ratcliffe, A. Hunter. *Texas*—Fowler. *Mississippi*—Winans, Drake, Lane, Rogers. *Alabama*—Murrah, Boring, Garrett, Hamilton. *Georgia*—L. Pierce, G. F. Pierce, Parks, Glenn, Evans, Longstreet. *South Carolina*—Capers, Wightman, Betts, Walker. *North Carolina*—J. Jamieson, Doub. *Virginia*—Early, Lee, W. A. Smith, Crowder. *Philadelphia*—White, L. T. Cooper. *New-Jersey*—Neal, Sovereign—56.

